

# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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From Beginning,  
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Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 18 cents.

## NORWEGIAN SONNETS.

To Norrøway, to Norrøway,  
To Norrøway owre the faem!

## I.

## UP THE SKAGER RACK.

It was the point of dawn; and in the bow  
I stood alone, facing the grey north-east.  
Far on the left, like a huge brown sea-beast  
That had been chased and was o'ertaken now,  
Stolen on by night, lay Norway. From the  
    prow  
A hissing of salt spray that still increased  
Rose plainly audible—for the gale had  
    ceased  
And the keel cut the sea-plain like a plough.  
And so with only a ripple on the sea,  
And ne'er a storm-cloud o'er us muttering  
    black,  
We voyaged with an easy course and free  
And—disappointing, now on looking back;  
For the old sagas make the surges flee  
Like riderless horses up the Skager Rack!

## II.

## THE SCENERY—GO AND SEE IT!

AND speak ye may of grandeur and of gloom  
And all the dread magnificence that lies  
Where through the dale the foam-flecked  
    torrent flies,  
Or gorgeous sunsets o'er the mountains bloom.  
But who shall in the sonnet's scanty room  
Set the majestic magnitude, the size,  
The mighty mountains and the widening  
    skies  
Up on Norwegian table-lands assume?  
This you must see to feel within your heart,  
And cannot know from others: nature still  
In this defies all imitative art,  
Baffles all schools and soars beyond their  
    skill:  
It is a joy she only shall impart,  
But, once received, it ne'er can cease to  
    thrill.

## III.

## A TERROR OF THE TWILIGHT.

FAR in Norwegian solitudes we strayed:  
Behind us lay a long bright summer day,  
But evening now was stooping o'er our way,  
When, at a sudden turn, alarmed we stayed.  
It was a terror by the twilight made  
Of river, cliff, and cloud, and the weird play  
Of sunset's one live liberated ray  
Piercing the horror of the pine-wood shade.  
Stood, like a charred cross, or a huge sword-  
    hilt,  
Against the sky, above the cliff's black line,  
That seemed a bastion by Harfager built,  
A solitary thunder-blasted pine;  
On the dark flood below, the sunset split  
What now was blood and now was wassail-  
    wine.

## IV.

## THE CLIMB FROM VALLE.

STEEP was the climb from Vallø: far below  
The sæter \* we had left lay lost in mist,  
And still the height rose higher than we  
    wist  
Beyond the ravings of the Otteraa,†  
And now a thin bleak air began to blow,  
And now the bispevei ‡ to turn and twist,  
Here round a tjern § no summer ever kissed,  
And there behind a hide of hoarded snow.  
The stars dissolved anon; and airy trills  
Of wavering music showed the day begun:  
We toiled to meet the morn—o'er rocks, o'er  
    rills;  
And, breathless but at last, our wish we  
    won—  
The top! and, lo, a countless herd of hills  
Tossing their shining muzzles in the sun!

## V.

"PAA HEJA:" *Life on the Heights.*

Is there a pleasure can with this compare?—  
To leap at sunrise from your mountain bed,  
Roused by a skylark revelling overhead,  
And drink great draughts of golden morning  
    air;  
A plunge, and breakfast—simple rural fare;  
Then forth with vigorous brain, elastic tread,  
Hope singing at your heart o'er sorrow dead,  
And strength for fifty miles, and still to spare!  
That joy was ours! O memory! oft restore us  
Those autumn runs, here in the smoky town,  
When through the woods our mad nomadic  
    chorus  
Rang freedom up and civilization down!  
Io! my hearts! the world was all before us,  
And we nor owned nor envied king nor crown!

## VI.

## THE MOUNTAIN LAUREATE.

MORNING is flashing from a glorious sun  
On the broad shoulders of the giant fells  
That outreach arms across the narrow dells  
And form a silent brotherhood of one  
Listening their skylark laureate! New begun  
He up the heavens in ever-rising swells  
Carries their thanksgiving in song that wells  
From his small breast as if 'twould ne'er be  
    done.  
What life his music gives them! They are free  
In the wild freedom of his daring wing;  
And in the cataract of his song, the sea  
Of poetry that fills all heaven, they sing;  
He is their poet-prophet in his glee,  
And in his work and worth their priest and  
    king!

J. LOGIE ROBERTSON.

Blackwood's Magazine.

\* Mountain farm.

† Pronounced Otterø.

‡ Bridle-path.

§ Mountain lake, tarn.

From The Contemporary Review.

ON SOME NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS  
OF EUROPEAN SOCIETY.

THE word "society" is employed in various senses. We use it in political science to designate the community of men united to a State; in the language of certain aristocratic circles in Paris and London it means a league between a limited number of *coteries*, whose chief care is to keep their doors closed, in order to follow the important pursuit of amusement among themselves. It is not our purpose here to treat either of Rousseau's or of fashionable society, but of the totality of those classes which everywhere represent national culture, and are, properly speaking, not only its chief producers but chief consumers, which preside over national activity, which take the lead in State and Church, commerce and manufactures, letters and science, — in short, of the whole of that *stratum* of the nation which in Germany, characteristically enough, goes by the name of the "educated class" (*die Gebildeten*). Now, the nature and *habitus* of this society has, in different nations, at different periods, assumed set forms under the determining influence here of this, there of that particular class, now of this, now of that predominating interest. It is clearly not unimportant whether a national society took its definite form during the sixteenth or eighteenth century, whether the decisive part in its formation was played by a community of peaceful burghers or by a nobility of soldiers, whether the principle which prevailed in its constitution was that of art or religion, of science or the State. It may not be uninteresting to trace this progress of development in different nationalities, even should we keep strictly to the high-road without tarrying by the way, much less allowing ourselves to be enticed into any of the many byways lying invitingly on every side.

I.

NATIONAL society was a thing unknown to the Middle Ages. The spirit by which they were animated was a spirit of universality; throughout the whole of Europe there was but one religion, one

science, one form of government, and even in literature the substance at least was common to all nationalities. On the other hand, each single nation was divided into strictly severed castes; the citizens and the clergy, the clergy and the knights, were sharply separated from each other without intermedium. In a similar way all intellectual intercourse between the provinces was impeded by differences of dialect, or could only be carried on by means of Latin — *i.e.*, of a universal instrument, which hardly permitted the spirit of a nation to find utterance. The development of a national society dates only from the Renaissance, for it was not till then that the races of Europe began to form into individual nations, that each of these proceeded to develop a political and linguistic unity of its own, which enabled the cultured classes to approach each other, to indulge in the interchange of thought and feeling, to act and live together, and to feel the healthy glow of common interests.

In this point Italy preceded every other European nation; for although, at the close of the fifteenth century, it had not yet formed a national State like the united kingdoms of Spain, England, and France, it had begun since the last German invasion to feel itself an independent nation, like the Greeks of old as opposed to the barbarians. A generation earlier, the written language of Italy had already been recognized as such from the Alps to the Passaro. Above all, the barriers of caste between the educated had well-nigh completely disappeared by the time the revival of classical antiquity gave all of them a common interest. Here, however, it was neither the army nor the clergy, it was the citizen class — *i popolani grassi* — especially the commercial portion of it, towards which the rest gravitated, which absorbed the others, or at least infused its spirit into them. At the time of the Renaissance Italian society was essentially a town society, nor has it ever ceased to be so. In political as well as in intellectual life, the towns stood in the foreground: Milan and Genoa, Venice and Florence, Bologna, Pisa, Siena, Perugia. During the fifteenth, and even until the

beginning of the sixteenth century, some of these cities were great European powers of about the same importance as the Netherlands in the seventeenth; and in the greater part of them the citizen class of wholesale merchants had early overpowered the military nobility of Germanic origin and possessed themselves of the sovereignty. Who does not know, by Dante's example, that a noble was not allowed to take part in the government of Florence until he had renounced his title and had himself inscribed in a corporation? And the armies employed by each of these cities to fight its bloodless battles were no nursery-ground for a fresh aristocracy. Held as they were in slight esteem, recruited from the lowest orders, of very little influence in the State, they always remained dependants of the lords of the cities. Even in towns, where, towards the close of that period, the generals — mostly men of low extraction — succeeded in seizing the reins of government, — as, for instance, the Sforzas in Milan, — their officers did not form a military nobility that gave the tone to society. Nor was it otherwise with the clergy. Education having become diffused among the laity, their influence was very small, nor did they in any sense take the lead in society, neither had they any privileged position, nor did they enjoy any special reverence. The clergy intermingled with the rest of that citizen class from which they mostly sprang, and when a prelate became the object of any special regard, this distinction came to him in virtue of his superior attainments, the weight of his individuality, or his connection with powerful citizens, never in virtue of his clerical dignity alone. The men who rose to distinction in the State, in letters, in art, belonged almost exclusively to the citizen class. Petrarch's father was a notary, Boccaccio's a merchant, Macchiavelli and Guicciardini were of middle-class parentage. Even long after certain families had grown into dynasties and certain groups of families into oligarchies, they still continued to trade as before, not always to the advantage of the State which they ruled at the same time, while their relations towards those who in

reality were their subjects remained in form those of fellow-citizens. The relation of Cosimo de' Medici towards Donatello and Brunelleschi resembled far more that of a friend than of a patron, and the intercourse between his grandson Lorenzo and the Pulcis or Angelo Poliziano took place on a footing of familiar equality. The fact is, that these sovereigns were not foreign conquerors, such as ruled in other countries and in Italy also at an earlier period, neither had their ancestors led a separate unapproachable life from times immemorial. Here rulers and ruled had grown up together, had transacted business with one another, and the fiction that the rulers were only allowed to govern by the consent of the entire community was still retained. Hence the tone of complete equality which prevailed in these circles. Nor was it predominant in Florence only; for even in Ferrara, the only northern state of Italy whose sovereigns belonged to a nobility established by foreign conquest, the same tone reigned, albeit with somewhat less freedom. The examples of the cities exercised in fact a decisive influence. Outwardly at least, this democratic equality has kept its ground in daily intercourse even to the present day. Nowhere are conventional forms less observed than in Italy, — they are only brought forward on great State occasions; whereas in ordinary circumstances a familiar *laissezaller* is the order of the day, which among Italians, chastened as they are by centuries of civilization, seldom degenerates into vulgarity. Still this Italian society, in spite of its ready wit, its *brio*, and its inborn gracefulness, had not at that time, nor has it now, the peculiar charm of French and Spanish society, as it appears in the comedies and novels of the sixteenth century; that charm which consists in the art of moving freely within the limits of conventional forms, of making them bend to the will, of allowing the individuality free play in spite of them, of knowing how to speak of anything and everything without infringing them. Such social intercourse was in fact a game of skill, which, though not without its dangers as well as its fas-



cinations, differs as widely from vulgar familiarity as a sonnet does from doggerel. To be sure, doggerel, like the versification of "Faust" and of the "Wandering Jew," may be worth all Petrarch's sonnets put together; still even a Goethe hardly ventures to indulge in it always and everywhere, and readily returns to the sonnet, where circumstances require it, because he feels that it is precisely "when the spirit begins to move most powerfully," that we learn the value of restraint; and may this not be applied in the main to every branch of culture?

This social equality which acknowledged no superior, even while it submitted in fact to rulers, in the Italy of the fifteenth century was coupled with a rare unity of culture. Each speciality having developed on the soil of a common culture, mankind here were no longer divided into merchants, statesmen, men of learning, and artists. Who among us can say whether it was his wool trade, State affairs (at that time still in the hands of a circle of families nearly allied to him), his friend Donatello's works, or the new university he had undertaken to found at his own expense, which most absorbed the interest and attention of a Niccolò da Uzzano? Even the fair sex took a large part in this education and in this society. Convent education was still the exception. Patricians' daughters were taught Greek, Latin, and mathematics at home with their brothers. Thus the gulf which now yawns between the sexes was at that time nowhere perceptible, nor was there any opportunity for the modern blue-stocking to arise, since she is a product of the unnatural state of things by which women are debarred from the educational advantages of men, so that those who contrive to obtain them find themselves isolated among their own sex, and are in danger of appearing and indeed of becoming unwomanly. "In the hands of the women of the Renaissance," as a contemporary writer finely expresses it, "the education of their time only became an instrument with which to develop their feminine characteristics more brilliantly; not the result of an exterior, conventional education, but an interior harmony, arising from the co-

operation of all the forces of woman's nature." Well might Ariosto proudly sing:

Ben mi par di veder ch' al secol nostro  
Tanta virtù fra belle donne emerge  
Che quò dar opra a carte ed ad inchiostro  
Perchè nei futuri anni si disperga.

For, indeed, they were not a few, those highly educated women of the fifteenth century, who shared largely the conversation, the intellectual pursuits, nay, even the business of the men; yet not one of them ceased to be a true woman. Let us but remember Lucrezia Tornabuoni, herself a poetess and a friend of poets, the mother of Lorenzo de' Medici, who superintended the studies of her gifted son, who presided wisely and cleverly over a large establishment, the master of which, Piero, was almost constantly ill, and let us call to mind that charming letter, in which she describes the beauty of her future daughter-in-law, Clarice Orsini, with the eye of a female connoisseur. The way in which Sandro Botticelli has placed together the juvenile daughter of the Albizzis with Pico della Mirandola in his glorious frescoes at the Villa Lemmi near Florence, leaves no doubt, though this young lady is not mentioned in the chronicles and correspondences of the time which abound in allusions to so many of her contemporaries, that the handsome prodigy of his age, who "knew everything that could be known," must have been an intimate and playfellow of the graceful girl. And, setting aside Florence, did not Caterina Cornaro, who facilitated the first steps of a Bembo in his eventful career, continue to patronize art and science long after she had doffed her Cyprian crown and retired once more into private life at Venice? Did not Elisabetta da Urbino number a Castiglione, a Bernardo Accolti—an author whose "Virginia" is too little known—among her intimate friends? Were not Bojardo and Guarini, the humanist, guests at the table of the elder Leonora of Ferrara, just as, two generations afterwards, Tasso and Guarini, the poet, found favor and protection with the younger Leonora? And how learned was that graceful housewife Portia, the mother of Torquato!

Who does not recollect Vittoria Colonna, Michael Angelo's beautiful muse? Above all, where can we find a finer type of true womanhood than Isabella of Mantua, whose letters to her husband, to her sister-in-law of Urbino, to her artist friends, reveal a feminine soul of such finished grace through their somewhat constrained form. Now we find her receiving the most learned works of antiquity from Aldus Manutius; now it is Ariosto who submits to her the sketch of his "Orlando Furioso;" Bellini is unable to supply her fast enough to please her; she listens to Plautus's comedies, ay, even to Cardinal Bibbiena's "Caláandra," a piece which men would nowadays hardly venture to read aloud to each other, and enjoys it merrily in company with the men belonging to her society; yet no one who had ever seen her found her a whit less womanly because she had read Vitruvius, or dreamt of casting a doubt on her purity and chastity because she could laugh heartily at Macchiavelli's "Manragola." Girls under twenty were, of course, not admitted to social intercourse with their elders, any more than boys of the same age, and unmarried women above twenty were so extremely rare at that time that they scarcely come into account.

Women's influence in the State was, for the most part, quite indirect, although a few, like Caterina Sforza, took openly a leading share in politics. In general, the part played by women was confined to the truly feminine mission of receiving and returning ideas and aims; they seldom took the initiative either in thought or action; but they lent the lives of those indomitable men moderation, grace, and refinement, whenever a lull in the inexorable struggle for existence gave them an opportunity of doing so. And thus they were indeed the first to realize that artistic ideal which the whole age had in its mind's eye. For art—*i.e.*, the interpreting representation of nature—was the principle which pervaded the whole intellectual atmosphere of the age. During the memorable interview between Charles V. and Pope Clement VII. at Bologna, which was to seal the fate of Italy for many years to come, the wonderfully wrought clasp, designed by Benvenuto Cellini to fasten the pope's mantle, caused both sovereigns for fully a quarter of an hour to lose sight of the purpose for which they had met. It was their desire to render not only their domestic surroundings, their dress, their dwellings, utensils, gardens, their banquets and entertainments,

but even the State, and above all the individuality, works of art. And here it was that the Renaissance, which possessed no conventional compass, too soon struck upon the rocks which were destined to wreck the vessel of Italian society. It had been able to reach the highest possible pitch of art, because here liberty was restrained by law, and Ariosto has remained the most striking example of an apparently unrestrained, in reality strictly controlled freedom. Not so in daily life; for here people only too readily forgot that the Muses should accompany, but are incapable of guiding life. An age which could see no more guilt in a Caesar Borgia than in a tiger lurking for and pouncing upon its prey, could not long hold together. Art is indifferent to morals; society cannot subsist without moral convention. Art is inexorably true; society cannot dispense with a certain amount of hypocrisy. The absolute indifference with regard to social morality, and the undisguised love of truth which characterize this period,—a love of truth, by the way, which was quite compatible with the use of direct falsehood or dissimulation in order to attain a given end,—the worship of nature as infallible, and the contempt for any other authority, necessarily led this society to its dissolution, and had done so, in fact, long ere Spanish influences fettered the life of Italy.

Unrestrained political license had already resulted in petty despotism before an unlimited intellectual freedom resulted in narrow-minded bigotry. True, art had not ceased to be cultivated; but it had become an exterior thing, and the artist degenerated with inconceivable rapidity into the *virtuoso*, the man of science into the pedant, poetry became academism, sociability a mere satisfaction of empty vanity and a coarse thirst for pleasure. Commerce declined, and with it a free, high-spirited class of citizens. Work began to be discredited; a man of quality lived on the inheritance of his forefathers—nay, even down to the present day, Italians give the name *signori* only to those who have enough to live upon without working. The ancient city patriciate itself became a nobility, not of arms, but of court offices. And what courts were those at which the descendants of the great merchants of the fourteenth century were now content to fawn for titles and dignities, even when, as at Florence, the new sovereigns descended from a race of traders! They were the courts of small vassals to great foreign poten-

tates. The horizon had narrowed. Nowhere was there an open view to be had of the wide ocean of European politics. The noble freedom of intercourse which had prevailed during the previous century gave way to an oppressive etiquette, a formal, Spanish ceremonial replaced the preceding *laissez-aller*. Outside the court, it is true, the old tone of friendly intimacy was still preserved in the intercourse between the cultured middle class and the newly-created nobles, who were so numerous that their titles were almost meaningless; but it had become purely a matter of form, and this merely external equality, which had been inherited from the age of the Renaissance, can only deceive the eye of the superficial observer. Then, as now, counts and marquises exchanged the familiar "thou" with lawyers and professors, but only with the certain knowledge, that the distance which separated them inwardly could not be overstepped, as Don Giovanni is able to joke with Leporello with impunity, because both inwardly feel how great a gulf is fixed between them. In fact, a relationship of client to patron had taken the place of the former equality. The decline of commerce and of manufacture, the wide extension of the court and of the service of the State besides, had for their consequence a steadily increasing poverty and servility of the middle class; the number and influence of parasites was continually augmenting. Contrary to the custom elsewhere, the Church, justice, government offices became a refuge for these reduced classes, who no longer felt it a humiliation to be patronized by the wealthy. The dignity with which religion, jurisprudence, and the State are wont elsewhere to invest their servants, here had lost all its value; the priest was an affable bachelor to whom the smaller social functions were entrusted, nothing more; the man of learning, the poet—generally also an *abbé*—was the panegyrist, at times even the buffoon of the noble house; the judge was hardly anything but a business agent; the State councillor was a steward to the *signori*. The wives and daughters of such professional men—for commerce had almost entirely dwindled into a retail trade—led the life of maidservants, in extreme poverty, seclusion, and obscurity, from which they only issued on high days and holidays. The women of higher rank, it is true, continued to be the centre of society, in the aristocratic acceptance of the term; but they, too, passed at a bound from the con-

vent into marriage; on them likewise the absence of all public life acted depressingly, damping their energies; they also were shut out from the interests which animated the men; they also, like the men, allowed themselves to be absorbed by petty social and religious formalities and the jealousies of position and rank, or gave themselves up, behind closed doors, to every caprice of passion or indolence. The one thing which slightly relieved and enlivened the hopeless emptiness of female existences such as these, was recognized, tolerated *cicisbeism*; while the inborn grace, the childlike simplicity, so nearly akin to nature, of Italian women, perhaps also the inheritance of the oldest of European civilizations, toned down and refined to a certain degree the inner poverty of such a life. The traces of this existence of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are not yet quite obliterated; but Italy is perhaps the country which has undergone the greatest social revolution during the last forty years, a revolution which is still proceeding. French domination at the beginning of this century, and the almost uninterrupted influence of French literature ever since; the levelling of all frontiers in the interior; the present rule of the Piedmontese, a race more nearly allied to the Swiss than to the Italians; above all, the rise of a new ruling class, and precisely of that very same middle class which for the two previous centuries had been so poor and so humbly dependent, and which to-day reigns supreme and is fully conscious of the advantages of its position,—all this has contributed to bring about a transformation, which is still far from being completed.

## II.

IN France likewise the influence of Spain was powerfully felt after that of Italy; but in that country national life was so vigorous, that it soon completely subjected and absorbed the foreign element. From time immemorial the State had been led, the Church governed, and the cultivation of literature and science appropriated to themselves, by the nobility of the sword and the robe. These two classes had at an early period entered into a league with the crown against the higher aristocracy. But the more independent the monarchy rendered itself of that aristocracy, the greater became the influence and importance of its allies. Finally, when Richelieu had overcome the higher nobility, they also entered into

the service of the court, and that court soon became the centre of French life, first in Paris, then in Fontainebleau, St. Germain, Versailles. And, together with the importance of the court, that of the Parisian Parliament also increased, and it not only felt its own power as independent of the will of the king, but was occasionally inclined to make him feel it too; for France in the olden time knew no Jeffreys, — the French judges always preserved their political and social independence, because their half-inherited, half-purchased seats could not be taken from them, and the wealth of their families was constantly renewed by marriages with the daughters of rich citizens. The "city" now began to group around the Parisian Parliament as the court around the king. Intellectual and political centralization thus kept pace with one another. "Court and city" henceforth became synonymous with representatives of culture. Montesquieu naïvely says: "J'appelle génie d'une nation les mœurs et le caractère d'esprit des différents peuples dirigés par l'influence d'une même cour et d'une même capitale." It is evident that, in Montesquieu's eyes, Germany could not lay claim to a national culture. But "court and city" meant the nobility of the sword and robe and all that belongs to it; and in fact the characteristic features of French culture were, down to the Revolution, nay, even in the National Assembly of 1789, but especially during the Restoration (1814-1830), which may be looked upon as a distinct revival of ancient France, derived from the courtier and the man of law. Even to the present day the habits and customs, the forms and views of these two classes give the tone, if not in the State, at all events in society. At the time when this national society, together with the national literature, assumed its definite form, — *i.e.*, in the second third of the seventeenth century, — the former by throwing off the Spanish yoke and the latter by freely metamorphosing Spanish forms, it was these two closely connected classes which took the initiative in the changes that were then wrought. A Voltaire and a Balzac, a Corneille and a Malherbe, met together with a Condé and a Retz, in the Marquise de Rambouillet's drawing-room; all of them were more or less intimately connected with Parliamentary families (*familles de robe*).

Pascal, like almost all Port-Royal, originally belonged to the nobility of the robe, as did Montaigne before, and Mon-

tesquieu after him. The great Gallican too, who impressed upon the French Church and French pulpit eloquence their lasting stamp, Bossuet, was the son of a judge. But he, as well as Bourdaloue, Fléchier, Massillon, and many other distinguished prelates of ancient France who followed him, became one of the stars of Versailles, who contributed in no smaller degree to the literary wealth of their country than courtiers of the highest rank, such as Laroche-foucault and St. Simon. There were besides a number of professional writers living at Versailles: La Bruyère found his best-known types at court, and Racine sang Louis XIV.'s connection with Mademoiselle de la Vallière in his "Bérénice," and wrote "Athalie" and "Esther" for Madame de Maintenon's St. Cyr. And side by side with the dignitaries of the Church and representatives of literature, State officials and military commanders assembled about the monarch's person, contracted friendships with these men, shared in their interests, profiting greatly by their intercourse, while they communicated to them in return their own wider and more liberal view of things. Every noble family of high rank, however, was in itself a tiny Versailles, with its own *abbés* and men of letters who stood in no subordinate position towards its members, but rather associated with them as friends, giving them intellectual animation while they received a freer knowledge of the world in exchange; for the court, which was the prototype of this whole society concentrated around it, was no miniature court like that of Lucca or of Parma; it was the court of a great power, nay, of the great European power, *κατ' ἐξοχήν*; there was nothing to limit or intercept the view. The highest interests were treated and decided here; nothing was petty, not even court ceremonial, because it remained exclusively the form of life and never became at the same time its substance, as was the case in Italy. The disputes between Jansenist and Jesuit, between Protestant and Catholic, between the Gallican Church and the Roman Curia found their echo here. Here it was that the supremacy of the Continent and the defence of the country were planned. Here Molière's latest comedies were discussed with the same warmth of interest as Pascal's letters against the Society of Jesus, or Bossuet's funeral oration on the great Condé. And as the court, so the city; all the educated and wealthy, to whatever class they might belong, took a

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living interest in these questions, which at once grew into national ones — not least the women.

Even a century later, Sterne expressed his opinion, that "with the French people nothing was Salic, except the monarchy." It is, in fact, the female element which always has reigned, and still reigns supreme in France, especially in the capital. Even Bonaparte, who certainly cannot be accused of allowing too free play to the fair sex, was forced to admit when he came to Paris as a young man of twenty-six (1795) that "this was the only place where they deserved to take the helm. . . . The men thought of nothing else; lived only in and for them. A woman must have passed six months in Paris to know what was due to her, and how she might rule." It is easy to betray the secret. The French women of those times were content to fight with the weapons peculiar to their sex. A Madame de Sévigné, a Madame de Lafayette, were women before they were anything else. With them authorship was quite a secondary matter, if, indeed, such writing can be called authorship. True, France was not without its professional authoresses, like Made-moiselle de Scudéry and Madame Des-houlières, but even they had a far greater personal than literary influence in society, and their period was short. From the time when Louis XIV. attained his majority, the political women of the seven-teenth, as well as the philosophical women of the eighteenth century, no longer appear directly before the public. Even Madame de Staël, in reality only half a Frenchwoman, thought a great deal more of her personal connections than of her writings, and had a warmer heart for her political friends than for her political principles. Nevertheless, we cannot deny that the unfeminine element began already with her to make itself objection-ably felt. The women of the *ancien régime* shunned all publicity; they were content to exercise an indirect influence, ruling over the rulers in all departments, without ever thinking it necessary to resort to the kind of warfare which belongs to the other sex. Anacreon tells us that nature has given each created being its own special weapons, — the bull its horns, the horse his hoof, man reason, and women beauty. By this, however, we are by no means to understand that all women are unreasonable and all men ugly, any more than that all men are reasonable and all women beautiful. He means that every woman, without exception, has re-

ceived from nature a certain amount of grace, of which she often endeavors, not unsuccessfully, to divest herself. If even so proud a man as Louis XIV. thought fit to doff his hat before the lowest of his kitchen-maids, whom he might chance to meet on a back staircase at Versailles, this was merely a tribute which France, embodied in his person, was always ready to pay to a sex, whose humblest members could lay claim to the rights of grace and weakness. This grace is not confined to the passing bloom of youth, nor to the outward person. There is also a grace-fulness of heart and of mind especially feminine. Thus, self-sacrifice and devotion, patience in suffering, intellectual freshness and suggestive *naïveté*, a shrewd, direct judgment, and an equally shrewd, direct speech, not less than cunning, tears, and the desire to please, are especially feminine weapons, seldom at the command of the other sex. Now, the French women of those two glorious centuries, from Madame de Chévreuse down to Madame Roland, owed their sovereignty, their well-merited sovereignty over the heroes of thought and action, to the judicious use of these arms, not to an unpleasing endeavor to compete with men on their own battle-field. For no species of interest was foreign to them, and so they presided over social life, while their influence in politics, religion, and literature was completely decisive. Nor do I by any means allude here only to the most conspicuous figures, — such, for instance, as Madame de Longueville, who succeeded in seducing her husband and brother, the great Condé,\* ay, even a Laroche-foucault and a Turenne, to open rebellion against the crown; or as Madame de Maintenon, who determined Louis XIV.'s inner policy for so long; as Angélique Arnaud, or Madame Guyon, the souls of French Jansenism and of French Quietism; as a Tencin and Geoffrin, whose *salons* gave the tone to the society of a whole century; I refer here to the numbers of women whose names were hardly known to the public, though they stood behind the greatest statesmen, the first writers, the leading men of society, as we gather by the new discoveries made from year to year by the admirers and students of that unique age. Nor does it do to be

\* At the time of the Fronde such offensive and defensive alliances between influential women and ambitious politicians were matters of everyday occurrence; of this kind were the unions between Retz and Madame de Chévreuse, Beaufort and Madame de Montbazon, Condé and Madame de Chatillon.

too quick to condemn the "corruption" or even laxity of morals of that period; for it presents fine, and by no means isolated, instances of conjugal fidelity and attachment. For example, the stout-hearted Duchesse de Chaulnes, of whom St. Simon relates that she refused to survive her husband; then the Duchesse de Choiseul, the friend of Madame du Deffand and of the Abbé Barthélemy, who almost worshipped her husband, the minister to Louis XV., albeit he was twenty years her senior; and the Marquise Costa de Beauregard, whose letters to her husband and children, published a few years ago, give us an insight into so noble a soul; the Maréchale de Beauveau, and numerous others. Many of those more questionable *liaisons*, moreover, which were tolerated in those times, were in reality little less than conjugal unions. What other name can we give to the bond existing between the Duc de Nivernais and Madame de Rochefort, or between the Chevalier de Boufflers and Madame de Sabran, even before the legal sanction — in the one case after forty, in the other after twenty years — had become possible? Can we conceive purer relations than those which existed between Mademoiselle de Condé and Monsieur de la Gervaisais, to whom marriage was forbidden, and who in vain sought to forget a hopeless passion, he on the battle-field, she in a convent? And can we venture to confound even relatively less sacred connections, such as those between Madame d'Houdetot and St. Lambert, Madame du Deffand and Horace Walpole, Madame du Chatelet and Voltaire, not to mention others — connections which lasted for many years, and derived their nourishment from a mutual interest in mankind's loftiest aims, — can we, I repeat, confound these with the thoughtless *liaisons* which begin and end in the caprice of a moment? When inclined to depreciate the moral value of these women of the *ancien régime*, let us rather call to mind the heroism, the firmness, the resignation with which, in the time of the great Revolution, they mounted the scaffold — where they were to expiate their enthusiasm for the ideals of their youth.

It was a characteristic distinction,

\* The relations between the Comte de Toulouse and Madame de Gondrin, between the Duc de Sully and Madame de Vaux, between the Marquis de St. Aulaire and Madame de Lambert, between the Comte Lassaye and Madame de Bourbon, between the Maréchal d'Uxelles and Madame de Ferriol were of a similar nature; the last of these, however, could never be ratified by marriage.

though only consistent with the whole constitution of French society, that young girls should have been strictly excluded from it; for it was less the apprehension lest they might fall in love foolishly, or contract an early undesirable marriage, which suggested this exclusion, than the desire to be able freely to discourse on all topics, even such as young girls cannot understand, or which it is either irksome or prejudicial for them to listen to. Now, conversation was the great aim of all social intercourse in France, if it can be said to have had any aim except sociability. It was to the French, what art was to the Italians of the Renaissance, at once the substance and the form of their mental activity. "On dit que l'homme est un animal sociable," says Montesquieu; "sur ce pied-là il me paraît que le Français est plus homme qu'un autre; c'est l'homme par excellence, car il semble fait uniquement pour la société." It was not solitary thought, imagination, and feeling, not a direct contemplation and reproduction of nature, not enterprise and action with the adroit manipulation of varying interests, but the intellectual elaboration we call conversation, — *i.e.*, the form of mental exertion in which thoughts and feelings are employed rather as stimulants to excite our faculties and bring them into play, than as their purpose and object, — which was the crowning result of that culture. The sudden birth of ideas in living language, brought about by the contact of mind with mind; the art of imperceptibly guiding and turning the game; the satisfaction of having found a suitable, an elegant, or an eloquent form for an idea, of being able to introduce the highest subjects into conversation without becoming abstruse, the lowest without being vulgar, of speaking of natural things without impropriety, of artificial things with simplicity, of gliding lightly over the surface of some matters yet so as to stimulate thought *en passant*, of diving to the depths of others without effort, of opening out sudden views, touching on personalities lightly without entering more deeply into the subject, of suggesting ideas by such equivocalities; above all, the art of satisfying one's personal vanity by flattering that of others, — this spirit it is which pervades the whole culture of a nation, whose gregarious propensities are not compatible with solitude, which is unable to exist without conventions, yet which feels the need of moving freely and gracefully within those arbitrary limits. Something of this spirit was communi-

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cated to the family, to public life, and to literature, and made of the cultured circles of France a society, the unwritten laws and intangible organism of which have outlived even the Revolution and its Reign of Terror, a society which is only at its ease, morally and intellectually, in moral "tights," because that costume has become a second skin — which no doubt implies that it has lost all conception of the nude — *i.e.*, the final in truth and nature. I have said that this code of manners, like the preponderance of the two classes in which it had been developed in the course of centuries, lasted long after those classes had lost their political privileges, although old Talleyrand used to say: "He who did not live before 1789, and did not take part in the conversation of those times, will never know the highest enjoyment allotted to mankind." Let us but call to mind the men of the *Constituante*, the Malouets, Lally-Tollendals, Lameths, Lafayettes, etc., and the *Girondins*, nearly all of them men of law and guardians of ancient forms; let us remember the leading circles of the Restoration, and the reign of Louis Philippe. Even down to the second empire and third republic, literary productions were not deemed indispensable to the reception of members into the ranks of the Academy, dukes, prelates, and illustrious men of law being admitted as mere representatives of the taste of ancient France in modern society. These forms, it is true, are no longer so clearly marked as they were, and more than once passion has overstepped the bounds of propriety even in the most select circles. Nevertheless, what was essential in the tradition is still alive, and the present exclusion from the State of the educated classes, and of those who have any social importance, may perhaps have the beneficial result of allowing French genius to come to itself again, and slowly to reconstitute its empire undisturbed by political interests.

### III.

SOMETHING analogous to French court life had begun to appear in England under the Tudors and the Stuarts; and here, likewise, it was the Church, the army, and the law, in a close alliance and assembled round the throne as their centre, which gave the tone in society. Even down to the present day, these three professions are the only ones which, far from depriving their members of the name and position of a gentleman, actually confer it. Still art, as well as social intercourse,

although both were held in high esteem and widely cultivated, even before the great rebellion of the seventeenth century, never had been leading principles in English society; for even at that time politics were already predominant. A high and independent tone prevailed in the society which Shakespeare and Ben Jonson have shown us, and which was represented by men of the stamp of Spenser, Bacon, Sidney, Russell. Women played a considerable and important, yet thoroughly feminine, part in it. Liberty of speech was very great, and seldom degenerated into coarseness. Classical education was universal and profound, and women shared in it; the interest in art and literature was extremely vivid. For a moment it seemed as if England were destined to realize the ideal of modern society; as if, under the fortifying influence of public life, liberty, and propriety, individual development and unity of culture, a taste for art and a lively, witty conversation would have free play. This healthy development, however, was nipped in the bud by the great Rebellion. To say of any great complex of events, resulting from a long series of facts and circumstances, that it might have been different, would be unhistorical. What may be said, however, is, that the natural growth of England's moral and intellectual life was stunted by the great Rebellion which saved England's independence, the Protestant faith, and political liberty. Still this event was unavoidable, for it was the product of a second development, accomplished within the core of the nation, which ran parallel with that higher one proceeding from the Renaissance. However this may be, Puritanism brushed the bloom off the national spirit of England. Later on, it is true, that spirit put forth a new blossom, which from the time of Locke to that of Hume brought England intellectually to the front; there arose even a period of belles-lettres with which nothing in the European literature of the past century can compare; nevertheless, whatever may be its intrinsic value, this literature had none of the delicate fragrance emitted by the creations of Chaucer and of Shakespeare, which is missing even in the inimitable productions of their successors, from Dryden and De Foe down to Goldsmith and Sterne. The modest, delicate bloom, the subtle, changeable hue, which feminine influences cast over a national literature, was destroyed; henceforth English literature became a litera-

ture of men, as English society a society of men. The new impulse under Charles II. was but a sorry imitation of French manners and customs; even a St. Evremond and a Grammont lost all living sympathy with their country's culture; the whole movement was, in fact, but a coarse caricature of French life; on the banks of the Thames the refined Epicureanism of French society degenerated into a low sensuality; liberty became license, high spirits dissolute recklessness, elegance luxurious ostentation. It was not till after the second Revolution of 1688 that a new kind of society was formed, which has maintained its ground down to our own time.

Even during the reigns of William III. and Queen Anne, but more decidedly under the two first Georges, the disaffected gentry had by degrees withdrawn to their estates. If all of them did not care to express their dislike of those "d—d Hanoverians" with the bluntness of a Squire Western, most were at any rate of his way of thinking. Thus country life, which Englishmen have always loved, became the normal existence of the higher orders. Even when the gentry, under Robert Walpole—himself a country gentleman—began to be reconciled to the court, the custom of remaining in the country excepting during the Parliamentary session, *i.e.*, the spring, was not discontinued; whereas, under Elizabeth and James I., it had been usual to spend at least three quarters of the year in London. True, the rusticated squire at first did not escape the shafts of the town wits and dandies; nevertheless the ridiculous figure of Sir Willful Witwoud, who had never been to town "since the Revolution" (1700), soon gave way to the pleasing, humoristic form of Sir Roger de Coverley, till Squire Allworthy finally became the personification of all peculiarly English virtues. For though this gentry for the most part bore no titles, still it was a nobility, and more than one plain Mr. could trace his pedigree back to the Norman Conquest. At the same time the younger sons of the nobles descended either directly, or by means of the three liberal professions we have mentioned, to the gentry, while wealthy merchants procured their sons or grandsons—the English say it takes three generations to make a gentleman—an entrance into the ranks of the gentry by the purchase of landed property or by means of the same professions. The English clergyman moreover, the greater part of whose pos-

sessions had not been confiscated during the Reformation, was, and in fact still is, himself a well-to-do country gentleman, whose rectory could often vie with the dwellings of county proprietors. Besides, he could marry and his sons and daughters share the sports and pastimes of the county families; he was not irrevocably condemned, like the French and Italian priest, to a single life, and thus excluded from all intimate family connections, nor to that of the needy country parson in Germany, whose means scarcely suffice to make both ends meet, or, indeed, to place him on a level with the wealthier peasants. The successful barrister and judge, too (this class had begun since 1688 to be virtually, if not legally, irremovable, a quality which had done more than anything else to secure the independence of the judges in France), the pensioned officer, the sons of the retired merchant, and, later on, of the returned *nabob*, on their side also became part of the country gentry, at any rate as far as influence was concerned, if not equally in a social point of view, in virtue of their landed property. Now it was this country nobility and gentry which gave the tone in English society—I say English, for circumstances were different in Scotland, and under their influence Scotch society assumed a form more similar to that of Germany. It consisted of free and independent men of wealth, most of whom had studied at Cambridge or Oxford, while many had seats in Parliament. They managed the affairs of the villages which lay within the precincts of their estates; they were justices of the peace and magistrates, and commanded in the militia. In a word, they did the State good and gratuitous service, and this alone, in the absence of an organized class of paid officials, would have secured them political predominance. In England, however, the law did not play the same part, either in politics or in literature, as in France. I can recall no writer of note, no prominent English statesman of the past century, who was a member either of the bench or the bar. Fielding, it is true, was a lawyer and even a London justice, but he was also a thorough gentleman both by birth and by education; and though Burke and Sheridan nominally commenced the study of law, they can hardly be said to have belonged to the profession; whereas the elder Lord Melville, who, like Lord Bacon before and Lord Brougham after him, really proceeded from it, never occupied any com-

manding position. The whole political world was almost exclusively recruited from the ranks of the country gentry, and though the literature of the time bore the impress of town life, nay, even of the life of the capital, we ought not to lose sight of the fact, that nearly all its representatives, from Addison, Steele, and Swift down to Gibbon, Burke, and Hume, passed into the public service, — *i.e.*, into a circle which consisted of statesmen who were also, for the most part, landed proprietors, and thus belonged to a class whose position, even when its members took no part in politics but spent their whole lives in a village, was still considered the most enviable in the land. Even in our days, after the great changes which have been wrought in political affairs by the Reform Bills of 1832, 1867, and 1871, and in the economical condition of England by the development of manufactures and free trade, the position of a country gentleman is still the ideal of all wealthy Englishmen. Even now an Englishman of any standing does not feel that he has a real "home" until he possesses a country-seat, and this country home is the one object of his life, the one aim of his ambition, the thing for which he toils day and night, and thus helps to increase the national wealth as well as his own. He who is not rich enough to purchase an estate, puts up in the mean time with Putney, Weybridge, or some other rural suburb. The city is only the gigantic workshop, where business is transacted, and money earned wherewith to indulge in horses, dogs, conservatories, and unbounded hospitality in the country. For there the long days and evenings have to be filled up with prolonged repasts, deep potations, sports and pastimes of divers kinds — hunting, fishing, rowing, archery, flirtations between young people of both sexes; side by side with which go also the more useful pursuits of local business and reading, for which the well-stocked country libraries afford an excellent opportunity — even now the English read more than any other nation in the world. At times, of course, life in these residences would become somewhat rough and boisterous; still, a healthy spirit on the whole animated this class, which was kept fresh in mind and body by out-door exercise and public tasks and interests; and in most essential respects this life has remained unchanged. True, English society, in which both sexes equally join, is to be found only in the country, for what goes by that name in town is more

a labor than a recreation, and consists mostly of formally arranged, specially invited gatherings, where the guests sit side by side without ease or freedom, exchanging commonplace remarks, and the relatively small amount of unrestrained hearty sociability still to be found in the metropolis in our time, is now, as it was a hundred years ago, a society exclusively of men, only now it meets in clubs, — even Parliament is a sort of gigantic club; whereas formerly it was wont to hold its gatherings at Will's Coffee-house, or, maybe, at the Turk's Head. Women — mind, I do not say young girls — seemed, as it were, to have disappeared altogether from the higher existence of the nation during England's most flourishing period. As far as I can remember, Lady Montague and Lady Holland were almost the only ones who, properly speaking, formed social centres, and neither of them wielded their sceptre with the grace that charms us most in women. We vainly seek a Jacqueline Pascal, a Lespinasse, a Boufflers, who exercised so decisive an influence over the religious, literary, and social life of the ruling class in France, not to speak of those innumerable women who determined French policy, from Diane de Poitiers down to Madame du Cayla. In England, politics, religion, letters, and society too, were men's province, for Hannah More's influence was confined to a small middle-class clique. From Addison to Johnson, the whole intellectual life of England was masculine in character. In Swift's greatest works there is nothing that betrays the influence his connection with Stella really exercised over his life. What we read of women in the writings of Pope, Richardson, Fielding, or Goldsmith seems to imply, that only girls played any part in society, and that, on attaining her twenty fifth year, a woman either withdrew from the world and devoted herself entirely to her household duties, or that she appeared only at the theatre and the card-table to show her diamonds, her feathers, and her paint, or to indulge in the coarsest kind of flirtation. The era of the blue-stockings only began at the commencement of the present century, with Miss Austen and Miss Edgeworth, though the name dates from the time of Lady Montague, and since then the azure tint has extended to other masculine interests besides letters. It is said that these female encroachments have entirely distorted the social relations between the two sexes which constitute

the whole charm of society, and that the intercourse between the sexes in England has lost a good deal of its former charm. This is not, however, the case with young, unmarried people, whose relations to each other have remained quite natural and pleasing, though their converse can hardly be called "society," since it is limited to a mere interchange of feelings, which is a totally different thing. Whatever may be the part which women apparently play in English town society of the present day, however strongly they may muster numerically, their actual influence, especially in politics, is very slight. One is, indeed, rather tempted to reverse Sterne's sentence with regard to France, and to say that in England everything is Salic but the monarchy. True, the queen presides over the Privy Council, and we find women sitting on school boards, charity committees, etc. etc. No doubt also much of the work is done by them. The more important decisions, however, are given by men. The wife of a member of Parliament who makes no demur at standing on the hustings by her husband's side—a position, by the way, which would suffice to render him an object of ridicule, *i.e.*, morally to annihilate him, for the moment at least, in France—is quite content to watch over and admire her spouse as her property, without desiring to guide his political steps from behind the scenes as a Frenchwoman would. We have no wish to pronounce an opinion on the comparative value of the two social systems, but we wish to point out the difference between them. Nobody can feel a truer regard and sympathy than the writer of these lines for the good Englishwoman, who lives only for her husband, enjoying his triumphs, sharing his anxieties, and still holding ready for conversation with his friends a lively wit, a sound common sense, a large stock of reading, and who shows more real taste and elegance in her plain but neat walking-dress than all the votaries of high art. Where, indeed, is there a lovelier type of womanhood to be found than in an English maiden? Where one that is more worthy of regard than the English matron, such as we find her, surrounded by her numerous family, in the houses of the middle class? Unfortunately, however, these types seem to be becoming rarer and rarer, and we find in their place crowds of authoresses, doctresses, prophetesses of woman's rights, muses, priestesses of high art, and huntresses after names and titles. These ladies nowadays seem often to take a

pleasure in appearing sexless, which is but another word for without influence, inasmuch as their influence proceeds from their sex alone. Friendship, from which every thought of difference of sex is excluded, competition in business, in which all respect and consideration for sex is placed under an interdict, are false relations, and, like all unnatural conditions, cannot be lasting. Woman's work is either inferior to man's, and then she must fail in the merciless struggle she has provoked, or it approaches it very closely in value, and then she generally sinks beneath exertions for which nature has not fitted her. It would be the same if we were to undertake her task in life, for

Swanzig Männer verbunden ertrügen nicht all' die Beschwerde.

Of the mother of a family, not to speak of a lady of fashion,

Und sie sollen es nicht, doch sollen sie dankbar es einsehen.

And ought not women also to recognize that the laws of nature cannot be opposed with impunity, and that these have assigned different spheres of action to the two sexes and different parts to each in the spheres which are common to both? As a man who betakes himself to female arms on the field—they have in common, becomes an object of ridicule, while he accomplishes but little, so does a woman lose all her charm as soon as she seeks to adopt men's weapons and a masculine style of warfare. These mutual relations, however, become yet more strangely perverted, if consideration for the weakness of one sex is expected together with an annihilation of all boundaries between both, as is largely the case in English society. In competition, the form which the struggle for existence assumes in human society, all combatants must stand on a footing of equality, otherwise the conditions of the combat cease to be equal. The "*Tirez les premiers, Messieurs les Anglais!*" is chivalry, not war, and if it pleases me to allow a competitor of mine to win the prize, because he may happen to be consumptive, this is generosity, not business. Now, what constitutes the whole charm of social intercourse is a diversity of nature combined with an identity of intellectual interests; and every consideration which imposes an exaggerated decency, nay, prudery, on men in their conversation with women, puts an end to all free intercourse



between them. *Maxima debetur puero reverentia*. And that is precisely the reason why *pueri* and more especially *puella* are out of place in society. It is certainly by no means desirable that gentlemen, still less ladies, should make use of improper language; still when natural subjects present themselves unsought in the course of conversation, is it really necessary carefully to shun them? Whoever wishes to form part of society must be capable of taking part in all the interests which animate it. A woman who desires to maintain any influence there, must be able to follow a philosophical discussion without lagging behind, a political argument without yawning; nay, she must even be able to hear a spade sometimes called a spade without blushing. This does not render it incumbent upon her to advance new philosophical systems or develop original political theories; for even in the struggle for existence, women are not called upon to take the offensive, or at any rate not directly, and in the great work of universal generation and development their activity is that of conception and giving birth, not that of creation and generation. But that it is quite possible for them to forego the exaggerated restraint which has been imposed on conversation without becoming unwomanly, is sufficiently proved by the noble women of the Italian *quattro cento* and of ancient France; and that this extreme prudery was not natural to the English, but is a product of modern conventionalism, is shown by the bewitching forms of a Beatrice and of a Rosalind, of a Portia and of an Isabella, of an Imogene and of an Ophelia, whose modesty and chastity is assuredly by no means tarnished by the *naïveté* with which they call things simply by their names, or jest upon subjects which in our days would be utterly tabooed. Or are we to take it for granted that Shakespeare never saw any such irresistible maidens and matrons, but conjured them all up out of his imagination?

This somewhat unnatural condition of English society was probably caused chiefly by that religious movement which interrupted the healthy development of England for a second time towards the close of the past century, as the political reaction did her constitutional progress. I have already shown elsewhere how English intellectual freedom, which had victoriously broken the fetters of Puritanism and arisen from the mire of the Restoration, was again destroyed, and how cant

regained an absolute dominion over the minds of Englishmen, as it had done in the seventeenth century, though in a somewhat different form. Its power over society, however, was still more irresistible. Whoever dared to oppose it, like Byron and Shelley, was driven into exile. Hypocritical respectability spread its grey shroud over English life, a leaden gravity took possession of society, an orthopædical prudery forced it into her strait-waistcoat. True, the England of the past century was neither very refined nor delicate in its habits; still, even if an Addison occasionally took a glass too much, if a Fielding was not at all times over-nice in the choice of his expressions, if a Goldsmith gave himself up a little too freely to a Bohemian life—where so artistic a feeling for beauty of form, so great a moderation in political judgment reigned, a social criterion would not long have been wanting; and a Clarissa Harlowe, whose virtue we cannot question, a Sophia Western, whose every word breathes innocence, show us that the women also were on the way that leads to a union of liberty with self-restraint, of simplicity with culture. When the narrowest religious interests were forced into the foreground and checked the free intellectual progress of the century, as Puritanism had done that of the Renaissance, society also was deeply affected by them. This was fortunately held somewhat in check by the political life, which at all times has purified and invigorated England like a current of fresh air. For politics still continue to be for England what art had been for Italy—the all-pervading, all-engrossing interest of the nation. And it is to this interest that English society is mainly indebted for the healthiness of its tone. By it the unity of national culture also was maintained, which sectarianism had menaced with destruction; the different classes were saved from isolation by political liberty, while the dismemberment that might have resulted from country life was prevented by political centralization, and thus an organic whole, with perfect freedom in each of its members, came into being, which differed as widely from the mechanical whole produced by the centralization of the French State, as it did from the disconnection of national existence in Germany. Now the free air of public life such as this may not be favorable to the growth of so delicate a plant as the refined sociability which flourished under the Renaissance in Italy or during the *ancien régime* in France;

but the value of that social refinement should not be over-estimated. A healthy public life, a fertile intellectual and a vigorous economical activity, an abundant if not over-refined enjoyment of existence, are things which, taken singly, still more collectively, far outweigh any such advantage. If a little less anxiety were shown to attain such a social refinement without accepting the conditions indispensable to its possession, it might well be that foreigners would hardly feel its absence from English life as a loss, least of all we Germans, who have no idea of the higher sociability which Italy and France once possessed.

## IV.

Is there any "society" at all in Germany, in the sense which other European nations attach to the word—a thing, by the way, which is quite conceivable even without higher sociability? We are almost inclined to question it. Three hundred years ago a society of this description certainly existed in Germany, but it was destroyed during the Thirty Years' War, and we Germans have been laboring ever since to reconstruct it, more especially in the present time, which has fortunately once more restored to us our national State. Before 1618, German and Italian society were not dissimilar, for the historical development of both nations has a striking, though easily explained analogy. Our cities at that time formed centres of culture, and it was the commercial patriciate which took the lead in them. Abundant riches, European connections, a solid education, resulted in a certain grandeur of existence which has since utterly disappeared. The wealthy delighted in refined surroundings, tastefully decorated dwellings, elegant mansion-houses and guild-halls, magnificent public buildings artistically designed and completed; but very few traces are preserved of what is, properly speaking, luxury. The style of life and education was common to all the higher classes and to both sexes, as was the case in Italy; nor were religious and political, literary and artistic interests less common to all than the mode of life and education. Chivalrous pastimes, in which nobles and patricians indistinctly took part, alternated with hard work in the counting-house; for as yet it was no disgrace to earn one's bread, and commerce, although the newly discovered ocean highways had injured it considerably, was still flourishing. True, the Hanseatic towns had lost a little of

their former importance, though Lübeck still set the example of a metropolitan style of life; but the great commercial firms of Augsburg, Nürnberg, Frankfurt—the Fuggers and Welsers, Hochstetters and Tuchers, Peutingers, Pirkheimers, Glaubergs, were still unshaken; and the heads of these firms were the associates of princes and nobles, artists and *savants*, their connections with Reuchlin, Hutten, Dürer, Erasmus, Melancthon, were of the most intimate kind, nor were their wives and daughters by any means excluded from intercourse with the great representatives of classic lore and art.

All this was changed by that dreadful war. Towns and villages had been destroyed, wealth annihilated, commerce ruined, the high spirit of the citizens was broken. Work had fallen into discredit, as in Italy. Those only who had inherited enough to live upon from their forefathers, were ranked among the aristocracy. All intellectual culture had vanished. Even the very language had deteriorated. A listless indifference had replaced the healthy interest exhibited by the higher orders of the preceding century in religious, literary, or political questions. The petty nobles as well as the city patriciates had lost their former independence; the princes alone had become more powerful and important at the expense of the central power as well as of the higher middle classes. These princes now proceeded to organize their power by means of a numerous bureaucracy. The reduced petty nobles and shortly afterwards the half-reduced town citizens entered into their service. And whoever had once passed into this class, never came out again; for the younger sons did not, as in England, return to the citizen class, and free labor was prohibited to those who possessed a title—nay, even to their children and children's children. And now began the title-mania. Nor was this unnatural, since none but the titled were able to purchase *Rittergüter*, none but the titled were permitted to hold offices of State, none but the titled were admitted to court; and these courts—there were no less than five hundred of them, without mentioning the *Reichsunmittelbaren*, who were three times as numerous—became the centres around which all social and political life gravitated; their ways and actions formed the subject of all conversation. And what courts they were! Without grandeur, cultivation, or originality; knowing no



other interests than those of vanity, no higher ambition than that of aping the external culture of foreign lands. Their nobles delighted in empty flunkeyism; even military service was neglected in their miniature armies. Not a trace of mental aspiration was to be found, save where some distinguished woman perchance broke through the barriers, and thereby let in a fresh current of purer air from the outside. To be sure, it was hardly better outside either; in the absence of all centralization, without a capital, without any common interests, the State, as well as society, broke up into hundreds and thousands of diminutive *coteries*. The horizon grew narrower and narrower, life became emptier and emptier. Prying curiosity, gossip, and envy developed to excess. Dependence engendered servility; constant surveillance, together with the absence of generally recognized forms, produced that want of self-confidence and assurance which characterizes our countrymen even to the present day, as soon as they leave their studies, and the snug and cozy round of their accustomed life, and which is so often taken for affectation by foreigners. "Les Allemands sont les plus sincères des hommes, mais non pas les plus naturels," said Ch. de Rémusat when he first visited Germany. To be sure, this is not quite so bad as if we were said to be the most natural of men but not the most sincere. All traces of that petty spirit in social intercourse, which grew up during the seventeenth century, are not yet effaced, nor is it a wrong judgment which G. Freytag pronounces, when he says that "certain qualities were formed in the German character, which even to-day have not quite disappeared: a craving for rank and titles, an absence of freedom in our relations with, and behavior towards, our superiors in social position, whether they possess official rank or hereditary titles; aversion from publicity; above all a strong disposition to judge the life and nature of others in a narrow, disparaging, microscopic spirit." And what else had they to criticise or talk about? Shut out from every, or at all events from any influential, share in State affairs; without public life, without any community of interests which might have promoted, so to say, a moral circulation, of which the most distant members would have felt the effects; restricted to the office and the tavern; debarred from all commercial or political contact with other nations; in poverty-stricken circumstances, having

constantly to combat with distress; how could the middle class work its way up to a free, open point of view from which to regard life? The growth of the national wealth was exceedingly slow, for it was not, in fact, till our century, and properly speaking till Stein's reforms in the administration and in the laws on property, till privileges had been abolished, inland barriers removed by the Customs' Union (*Zoll-Verein*), the river tolls done away with and the coinage simplified, — it was not until all this had been accomplished, that trade and manufacture once more revived, and with them the free life of the middle classes. In our fathers' days all these arbitrary obstacles to commerce and intercourse were still in full force, — impediments which at times seem almost to have been purposely established in order to prevent Germany from recovering the loss of two centuries, which other nations had gained upon her in consequence of the Thirty Years' War.

Now, just as the national life lost more and more of its coherence, and all sympathy between one city and the other gradually ceased, the gulf between the different classes likewise widened: the army was separate from the bureaucracy, the citizens stood aloof from the country nobility, who grew coarser and poorer, and being of no use to the community squandered their strength, until the Prussian army commenced to draw them into the service of the State, whereby little by little they once more entered into the common current. Now, among these sharply separated classes, it was that of the officials with a liberal education which soon began to predominate, precisely because the sovereign, whose organ it had become, was the only acknowledged authority: this bureaucracy therefore in Germany played the part which a merchant patriciate, a nobility of the sword and robe, and a landed gentry played in Italy, France, and England, — *i.e.*, it grew to be the prevailing type of German society in the eighteenth century. The remaining "notabilities" which a little town contained — professors, doctors, lawyers, and a small number of educated merchants — followed their lead. But the German officials did not form an independent class like the wealthy, irremovable French magistracy. The German judge, like all the rest of the officials, was the instrument of the sovereign, without the princely salary which permits the English judge to play so important a part in society; in this, as in

every other respect, he was, and remained, a modest, submissive official — honest, hard-working, conscientious — but without any decisive influence in the State or in society; poor and needy, timid and humble. It had become necessary to have recourse to the middle class, even at the beginning of the century, and rank in society was now conferred by office, as it formerly had been by birth. Of these citizen recruits in the bureaucracy a university education was required, and as all the above-mentioned notabilities attended the Latin school — the only one to be found in such places — every one, not excepting the few merchants who had the privilege of associating with them, acquired the same, often liberal, education, and this again led the way to the regeneration of society.

For, as the State gradually became strengthened by the severe discipline peculiar to this bureaucracy, so was the intellectual life of the nation invigorated by the preparatory studies required of those who entered into it. Modern German literature is a product of our higher schools (*Gymnasien*) and universities, and for more than a century it was for Germany what art once was for Italy and politics for England, — *i.e.*, the one great national interest, which left its impress upon the whole culture of her people. No wonder, then, if such a literature became a critically learned one, which stood in a close connection with science; no wonder if it was penetrated with philosophy and especially cultivated by those who taught, so as to form a literature of divines and professors different from that of any other time or people. This may, it is true, have had its disadvantages, but it had great advantages also. If our polite literature for the most part portrays narrow circles and circumstances, if its tone is often too didactic, its form at times wanting in elegance, its chief interests purely of a spiritual kind, if we miss the fresh current of public life in its pages, if in the idealism which pervades it, reality often falls short of its due; how great, on the other hand, is the inner nobility which is imparted to it by that idealism! What depth it acquires from this preponderance of the intellectual life of the individual over the external life of the collective community! We owe it precisely to the distance by which the circles that brought forth this literature were separated from reality, if we have arrived at the broad and unbiassed conception of life, which is unique of its

kind, and distinguishes us from every other people. A firmly coherent society usually holds together by means of the cement of prejudice and convention; whereas the specific characteristic of our culture during that century was freedom from all prejudice. Let any one, who is inclined to doubt this, remember the life led at Weimar and in Berlin, the social position held by Jews and by actors, the tolerance in matrimonial matters, — our literature, born during the sentimental period, may be said to have first introduced love matches, for till then *mariages de convenance* had alone been tolerated in Germany; let him also call to mind the high degree of religious forbearance, united to a religious feeling equally deep. It was intellectual unity, above all, which we acquired through this literature, and which later on paved the way to our political unity. By it, too, the nation once more gained a centre round which to gather. For a time literary and scientific interests stood entirely in the foreground. It forms a striking contrast between the history of our own and of other nations, that our higher orders voluntarily submitted to the guidance of the teaching class, from which princes, nobles, officers, officials, merchants, and women alike derived their instruction, nay, their whole intellectual life. The women especially, even from the very beginning, stood in the closest connection with men of learning, and it would be difficult to say whether they exercised or experienced a greater influence.

Everywhere, from Sophie Charlotte, the friend of Leibnitz, to Anna Amalia, the patroness of Wieland, Germany has distinguished princesses and ladies of rank to show, who did much to further intellectual life. The biographies of Herder and Goethe show how deep an influence Marie zur Lippe and Fräulein von Klettenberg exercised over the religious views of these founders of our culture. Or who can forget the part which a Frau von Stein, a Frau von Kalb, and the two Lengfelds played in Thuringia, — the Jewesses Rahel, Henriette Herz, and Dorothea Mendelssohn in Berlin? The wives of *savants*, too, — a Caroline Herder, an Ernestine Voss, a Caroline Schlegel, like the ladies of the Pempelfort and Ehrenbreitstein circles, — contested the palm with those of the metropolitan centres and of the nobility. We hear that all this has greatly changed since those times; the different classes are said to be more sharply separated, the sexes to

have greatly modified their relations with each other; religious strife has once more obtained admission into our life in spite—or shall we rather say, in consequence—of diminished religious feeling. Even our former cosmopolitan sympathies seem to have given way to a narrower feeling of patriotism—all which changes became inevitable, as soon as we undertook the task of forming a national society; and after all they are not by any means so harmful as the admirers of unrestrained moral and intellectual freedom would have us think, provided they be kept within bounds and not suffered to degenerate into intolerance, the spirit of caste, and a rigid conventionalism. But has the advantage, for which we have paid so high a price, really been attained? And if not, how are we to acquire that social unity, without having to relinquish what still remains to us of that individualism and freedom from prejudice, which were ours in the time of our greatness? It is not much, after all; for if we are still far from forming a single herd, as the English do, we nevertheless form a score of such herds in which individuality is scarcely better off. Liberals, Ultramontanes, professors, merchants, and whatever other elements the nation may contain, each form a world in themselves, a seemingly impassable gulf separating them from one another, and each of them concealing within itself a number of tacit freemasonries. To be sure, many things are in progress which bid fair to heal this condition of internal dismemberment—above all, the increase of material prosperity, which is the foundation of all the more refined forms of life, and the improvements in communication between different countries, which are constantly opening out a wider view and daily multiplying the points of contact with reality, not only for our learned middle classes, but also for the poor inhabitants of our inland towns.

Sons of university men enter more and more frequently into commercial and industrial life, to fight the battle of free competition and increase the nation's wealth, while steeling their own character and developing its self-reliance. The sons of our clergymen may be found in all parts of the world, whether it be the far East of India or the far West of America, transformed into robust, resolute, practical men, who return to the mother country as free and independent people that no longer tremble before every policeman they may meet.

Our political life is growing daily more public, and thus gradually forcing into the background all the petty interest in one's neighbor's private affairs, which had so disastrous an influence even in the most brilliant period of our intellectual history. Our political unity has not only given us a sense of our own worth, which was wanting in us, and which, in the better elements of the nation, is as far removed from national conceit as from our former submissive humility; it has given us political interests in common. The army, to which we are so largely indebted, yet which, despite the great national movement in 1813, had retained a good deal of its squire-like (*junkerlich*) exclusiveness during the prolonged peace, has drawn nearer to the rest of the nation, since our political revival, and tends more and more to become amalgamated with it. It is now the common school of all Germans, where the youth of all the educated classes meet together, first as volunteers, next as officers of the reserve, and finally as officers of the *Landwehr*; and, unless I am greatly mistaken, this citizen-soldier is destined to become the type of German culture, as the country gentleman has become that of English. Especially is this likely to be the case should admission to the volunteer service again be restricted to the educated, and those only who have passed through the highest school classes be accepted, and should the officers' corps in the standing army continue, as during the last fifteen years, to be more and more recruited from the middle classes. If it has hitherto been the official, with his habits, sometimes formal, sometimes off-hand, who predominated and gave the tone in German society, that position is now from day to day passing more irrevocably into the hands of the independent merchant and manufacturer, who is also an officer in the national army, and on whose excess of *nonchalance* soldiery discipline acts as a wholesome check, while the starchness of his military bearing is advantageously corrected by the freedom of civil life. Yet these are all merely external matters. As the free atmosphere of a scientific culture and ideal spirit, breathed by our officials at the university, is the cause of their great superiority to the clerks of the French bureaucracy, so their presence in the army brings our youth together in the service of something higher, of something which transcends the narrow interests of their every-day life; and this it is that, properly speaking,

crowns the whole civilization. This military training, it is true, only aims at making good Germans of our sons; but they ought to be brought up to be human beings as well. This our colleges (*Gymnasien*), our technical, commercial, and cadet schools do not do, or rather have left off doing; they train them to be merchants, professors, engineers, and soldiers, things which ought to be left to special schools, apprenticeship, or life itself. This is the thing we must guard against as the greatest danger which menaces German culture. It will only be when all the sons of the educated, no matter what career they may afterwards adopt, are once more obliged to sit on the same benches, to share the same pastimes, to derive their intellectual nourishment from the same source, that we shall again have a right to think and talk about a German society. Only then can we attain that social unity of which we all feel the want, as we have acquired our literary unity by hard work, and our political unity by the force of arms.

KARL HILLEBRAND.

From Temple Bar.

#### THE FRERES.

BY MRS. ALEXANDER, AUTHOR OF "THE WOOING O'T."

#### CHAPTER XVII.

FOR reasons best known to himself, General Costello was eager to leave London, and would not delay his departure for a day. The preparations for his grand-niece's departure were consequently performed at a gallop, and no one had time for fears, hopes, or doubts.

To Grace, the change brought fresh life. She was going into a new world. She would leave disappointment and mortification — ay, and obscurity — behind. For should she not have her mother's powerful and noble relatives to back her up? and did not money go twice as far in Germany as in England?

And to Germany she was determined to remove mother, Mab, and their belongings. The only drawback to her anticipations was the necessity of leaving Randal behind.

Randal alone in London represented an unknown quantity of extravagance, folly, and scrapes. Not wild or wicked extravagance, but errors of judgment, carelessness of money, yielding to petty tempta-

tions. Ought she not to stay and watch over him? On the other hand, if Randal was ever to gather strength sufficient for self-governance and self-guidance, it was high time he should begin. And Mab deserved consideration, and the dear mother too; something ought to be sacrificed to give her life a little brightness — a little society of the class to which she had been accustomed. For was not foreign society easier, gayer, more cultivated, and in every way more desirable than English? While for herself, on what regions of romantic adventure might she not be entering!

So ran the currents of thought and imagination, while her quick eyes and nimble fingers were busy about the many-sided arrangements requisite, not only for her own journey, but for the comfort of those she left behind.

How often she explained to Mrs. Frere the system of "supply and demand" by which the weekly expenditure must be regulated! with what tender tact she confided the care of mother, Mab, and the housekeeping to Miss Timbs, who accepted the charge with grim acquiescence! But the rock of her security was Jimmy Byrne; and Jimmy promised all things — to examine the housekeeping accounts, to visit Mrs. Frere at least once a week, to have an eye on Randal, to write to herself full private reports of how everything was going on, and to negotiate terms with Miss Timbs should Grace find quarters cheap enough and tempting enough to make emigration desirable.

The intervening days were at once too short and too long. She rose early and went to rest late, yet could scarcely accomplish all she wished; while the evening on which Uncle Costello proposed their journey seemed gone away ages back.

But the moment of starting came at last, and then, in spite of her bright anticipations, her keen pleasure at the notion of travel and variety, Grace's heart sank within her, and she could have given up all rather than say good-bye. It was not that she feared for herself; she would hardly have done so had she to travel alone, and her complete sympathy with the count made his companionship one of the best ingredients in the visions of enjoyment which flitted across her brain. But the idea of her mother alone, and fretted, and comfortless, was almost more than she could bear. The thought that supported her was the hope of furthering

the family welfare. For her own pleasure, she could not have left her dear helpless charges.

It was a dull, damp evening when they set out, and both Randal and Jimmy Byrne were at the station to see them off.

"Dear Randal! you will be very careful while I am away? You know we must save all we can, or we shall not be able to leave London."

"Why, Grace! you talk to me as if I was a baby! Yes, of course I will take care. And now give us a kiss! You would be a first-rate girl, Grace, if you were not so given to preaching."

"And you will write, Randal?"

"To be sure —"

"Come along, my dear! take your place," cried the count, who was got up in a most correct travelling-suit, and carried a roll of wraps properly bound up, with "Baedeker" thrust under one of the straps. "Stand back, Randal."

"Oh, uncle, I must shake hands with Jimmy!" then, in a half-whisper, "Jimmy, I trust everything to you; you have been my only help all these dreadful months. Write to me often, and — and — mind — mind Randal for me!"

"Faith, I will, Miss Grace dear! God bless you! Keep a good heart. Sure, the place will not be the same without you!"

A hearty hand-shake — a hasty adieu from the general: "You have been a good friend to my niece and her family, and I thank you, sir — thank you sincerely. Accept this snuff-box as a slight remembrance. It once belonged to Radetzky, and ought to be only in the hands of an honest fellow."

In another moment the doors were banged to — the guard whistled shrilly, the train moved off, and the familiar faces were lost to sight.

The family who had thus opened their doors to receive their unknown kinswoman were Saxon on the father's side. Frau Alvsleben was the eldest daughter of Count Costello, and had married early a gentleman farmer (*Gutsbesitzer*) of good, though not noble family. Losing her husband after a dozen years of matrimony, she had devoted herself to her children and the management of her son's estate.

Dalbersdorf, the family residence, was a *Gut* or farm of seven or eight hundred acres, lying between the Riesen and Erzgebirge, within two hours' march of the Bohemian frontier, and on the edge of a hilly forest district, remarkable for the

weird beauty of its curious water-worn rocks and winding, wooded gorges.

The Alvsleben family consisted of a son, about the age of Grace; a daughter Frieda, nearly two years older; and an elder daughter, the first-born and most important, who had been left a large fortune (according to the Saxon standard) by her godmother — a scion of the noble house of Von Walwitz.

Ulrich Alvsleben was already an officer in the Saxon hussars, and rarely at home; but the young ladies, after the usual course of governesses, and a school at Dresden till the period of confirmation, resided with their mother, sharing the many duties and simple pleasures of Saxon country life. The advent of this unknown English cousin was looked forward to with great excitement and a little discomfort, as it was supposed that the niece of *Herr Graf* — of whose greatness and nobility at home they had heard so much — would, like all English grandees, be accustomed to the luxury and splendor of a magnificent home, and consider the life of Dalbersdorf mean and dull. Still it would be a charming variety to have a girl visitor of her own age to lionize, and "perhaps make a friend of," said Frieda.

"And to improve our English," said Gertrud.

"And to teach our management to," said the mother; "for the English are thrifless, and have no womanly ways."

It was a fair September afternoon when the travellers reached Zittau, the nearest railway station to Dalbersdorf; and Grace, who was somewhat exhausted by a rapid journey and bewildering succession of new objects, roused herself to look with interest at the neighborhood of her temporary home. The station was large, new, and neat; and the red-capped station-master himself came to assist Count Costello and his companion to alight, with evidently a hearty and respectful welcome, though Grace could not understand a word he said. On the platform among a crowd of substantially-dressed peasants, small shopkeepers, soldiers, and ragged, jaunty, dark-eyed Bohemian reapers, Grace clung closely to her uncle's arm, feeling awfully strange and desolate, even for a moment asking herself why she ventured into this unknown land — a bit of cowardice of which she was heartily ashamed.

Count Costello pressed her hand encouragingly to his side and passed on, scattering bows and greetings right and



left — receiving reverential salutations in return — taking off his hat every other minute. Indeed, Grace thought she witnessed more bowing and hat-lifting, in the short transit through the station, than she had seen in all her life before.

They found a motley gathering of country wagons, *Droschken* (open public vehicles), and two or three unwashed, old-fashioned landaus, before the entrance. The station stood on high ground, and beyond, lay a wide plain, dotted with small villages, and chequered green and pale yellow where the stubble still remained, sloping gently up to a range of abrupt hills, covered with pine woods, and broken here and there by ravines or gorges; while far away on the left the blue outlines of bigger mountains rose against the sky, and showed where the giant range approached its humbler brethren — a fair scene, smiling in the rich sunlight, while the shadows of a few slow-sailing clouds crept gently over its varied surface.

"Oh, uncle, this *is* beautiful! I did not think it would be so beautiful."

"Ay, it is a fine country; but come along, here's the carriage. Ah, Fritz! How goes it?" This to a stout, square man, in plain blue livery, much buttoned, a round cap with silver band, and white cotton gloves, whose broad, sunburnt face was puckered up with a grin of unmistakable pleasure, as he pulled off his cap and bowed in reply to the count's greeting.

"Good, Herr Graf!" and a short conversation ensued, in which the coachman's part seemed to consist in the repetition of deep-chested, guttural "*Ja wohl*."

A roomy landau, not in the highest condition of cleanliness or polish, drawn by a pair of strong, but rough-looking, brown horses, stood near the entrance; and into it the count handed Grace, while the coachman assisted in placing the luggage — an operation inspected by the droschky-drivers with lazy, placid interest. A few more liftings of the hat, and, with a huge crack of the whip, they were off at a tolerable pace.

After driving for some minutes up a street bordered by handsome villas and their gardens, their carriage turned sharp to the right, and descended a steep road, on one side of which were rows of trees, and behind them a large architectural building; while on the other were irregular quaint houses with arbors and balconies, evidently of early date.

"We are only skirting the town," said Count Costello; "it is a nice old place, as you will think when you see it. We have a drive of four or five miles before we reach home. You'll be quite tired out, my dear."

"No, no," returned Grace. "I am so pleased with the look of the country, and the air is so fresh and reviving, that I seem to have shaken off my fatigue."

The carriage rolled on. At the foot of the hill they crossed a small river by a steep narrow bridge, and continuing their route through a long straggling suburb, struck away to the right by a rougher road, which led always up-hill across an open country where the various fields were only discernible by the difference of color — no trace of hedge-row or fence being perceptible, nor scarce a tree — the wide plain lying unsheltered in the blazing sunlight up to where the hills and dark pine woods rose a sudden mass of shadow.

A few exclamations, explanatory or otherwise, from her granduncle, a few replies from Grace, were all that passed between them, till, after about an hour's drive, they reached the brow of an unexpected hill. The ground fell away in a gentle declivity, rising again like an arrested wave at the other side of a wide hollow, not deep enough to be styled a valley; so that, looking from the side by which our travellers approached, the eye was carried on without perceiving the inequality of surface. In this hollow, which led in a slowly ascending slope to the hills now very near them, nestled a diminutive village, clustered round a little church with a bulbous steeple, and a large, square, grey house, with a steep roof, full of the queer, shy-looking, eye-like windows peculiar to this part of Saxony; a clump of lindens at one side, a short avenue of fine walnut-trees in front, and a patch of pine wood behind, which seemed to be an arm outstretched from the forest, gave a comfortable look of shelter to the mansion.

"Ha!" cried the count, pointing to the village, while the coachman screwed on the *mécanique* hard, and sent his horses down the hill at a trot, "there is Dalbersdorf!"

Grace's heart beat a little faster at this near approach to her unknown relatives. She stood up and gazed with great interest at the scene before her; a few minutes more, and they had passed the little church — passed the shop, where rolls of flannel and colored stuffs stood right and



left of the door — passed the "German Empire Post-Office," with its bright blue letter-box — passed a small deserted *Platz* — passed a long, low *Restauration*, with a gravelled space in front for chairs and tables, and a vine-covered arbor at each corner, where several people were drinking beer. As soon as they had cleared the village, they turned into the avenue of walnut-trees, which had no gate or fence, and the next moment were rattling over the pavement of a small court, enclosed on three sides by the centre and projecting wings of the old solid stone house; narrow flower-beds ran along the walls, and at the end of the east wing was an arbor covered with luxuriant greenery.

The large front door, which was ornamented by a heavy pediment and much incoherent carving of the Renaissance order, stood open; and just within it were three ladies, while a rosy-cheeked maid-servant — a marvellous conglomeration of towy-looking plaits twined round her head, and a grin of delight on her broad face — occupied an advanced post on the steps. Grace observed, too, that the door was framed in a thick green wreath, studded with bright blossoms; and above it was the word *Willkommen* in white letters on a red ground. It was written in the Latin character, and near enough to English to suggest pleasant ideas. A great whitish-brown, rough dog sat with almost judicial gravity on the lowest step; but no sooner had Count Costello alighted, than ladies, *Dienstmädchen*, and dog flew upon him, and vociferous tongues hailed him.

"*Ach Gott!* thou art welcome, thou best of fathers!"

"Welcome! thou beloved grandfather!" cried the ladies, clinging round him in a bunch.

"God be thanked, you have returned to us safe, Herr Graf!" exclaimed the servant, kissing his hand; while the dog added a hoarse, jubilant bark to the general chorus.

The taller of the two young ladies was the first to disengage herself and approach Grace, who had descended from the carriage, and stood back a little, contemplating the scene with sympathetic eyes.

"But, mother," she said, "we are forgetting the cousin," and, taking Grace's hand with a smile, first dropped a curtsey, and then kissed her brow kindly.

"I am very pleased to receive you, my dear, and hope to make you happy while you are our guest. You are indeed welcome!" said Frau Alvsleben in very fair

French, and embracing her young kinswoman.

"Here is your eldest cousin Gertrud; and this is my little Frieda. Come in — come in, my good father; come, my child! You must want rest and refreshment after your long journey."

So saying, she took Grace's hand and led her into the house, followed by the count, on whose arms both his granddaughters hung; the rear brought up by the red-cheeked servant, loaded with bags, parcels, and the minor etceteras of travel.

Crossing a wide, flagged hall, decorated by a couple of deer's heads and antlers, hung with wreaths of wild flowers and at one side of which was a broad oaken stair, Frau Alvsleben conducted her guest into a large dining-room.

The un-English aspect of this apartment struck Grace on entering. True, there were tables, chairs, curtains, and a sideboard, which sounds like any dining-room from the Land's End to "John o' Groat's house." But the absence of small, ornamental articles, the carpetless parquet, gave a look of bareness and heaviness almost depressing.

The walls were painted in panels, grey shading off to white, with pale blue centres above the dado, which was of oak; the furniture was of oak also, but darker, and shining with the vigorous rubbing of years. In two corners were *étagères*, on which were scattered books, papers, mineralogical specimens, the miscellany which collect in a general living-room. The sofa and easy-chairs were covered in red leather, much dimmed and rubbed by time and use; other chairs were cane-bottomed, with high backs of rough open carving in nearly black wood.

A tall circular stove of white tiles, fixed on a block of stone and surmounted by a vase or urn, was at one side of the room, and three windows at the other: from the centre one of which was suspended a bird-cage with a canary, over a wicker-work stand of plants.

The large windows and lace curtains did not do much to counterbalance the sombre effect of the dark furniture and a huge buffet with shelves, drawers, and cupboards which faced the door, and was decorated with numerous green and white silver-topped beer-beakers, and a wire basket of flowers.

A tall, elderly woman, with a strong, weather-beaten face, stood just within the threshold. She wore a dark, stuff dress, a white bib-apron, and a *Haube*, or species

of muslin mob-cap, with a lace-edged border standing up round it.

She greeted the new-comers with loud exclamations, and kissed the count's hand. He spoke kindly with her before placing himself at table, which was spread with various small dishes of sliced cold meat, cold partridge, green and potato salad, with fruit *compote*, black bread, and *Bröden*, equivalent to *petits pains*, all set out in china of unfamiliar shapes.

Frau Alvsleben and her daughters pressed the travellers to eat with hospitable warmth; while the elderly female above-mentioned, who seemed to be a housekeeper and was called Mamsell, after a short disappearance, returned with two large cups of *bouillon*, which was very acceptable to the new-comers.

Count Costello and his daughter conversed eagerly and noisily in German, with much gesticulation on his part, both evidently engrossed in the topics under discussion.

Frieda meantime did the honors of the table to Grace, and Gertrud went to and fro between the table and the buffet, fetching spoons or forks, or passing round the Rhein wine, in which, with much clinking of glasses and hand-shaking, Frau Alvsleben drank every one's health.

"And you have never left England before — no?" asked Frieda in English, as she handed the *compote* to her new cousin.

"Never! that is, since I grew up. We lived in France when I was a child."

"So! then you can talk with the mother; she never learned English," said Gertrud, "and we speak very little; but you will help us, *nicht wahr?*"

"Ach! can you not speak one word — not one word German?" asked Frieda, opening her eyes.

"Not a word; but I intend to work very diligently — and *you* will help me, will you not?"

"Yes, yes, with my whole heart! I will make you quite German in three — four weeks. We will speak German all morning, and English all the afternoon."

"I think you speak wonderfully already, considering you have never been in the country."

"You flatter me. I shall do better now you are come. Eat a little more — pray take some cheese — a little cake! Ach Gott! you eat not at all."

"Grace, my child," broke in the count, "how are you getting on? Maybe you'd like to see your room, if you will not take any thing more."

Grace rose, and with her Frau Alvsleben.

"Oh, the mother can stay — stay, dear mother. We will conduct you, my cousin," said Fräulein Alvsleben.

"Yes, you young things go together!" cried the count, and then addressed his daughter, who resumed her seat.

"Pray call me Grace; I shall feel a stranger if you do not," said our heroine, smiling.

"*Natürlich*, yes; you must not be strange — you who are of our race!" cried Gertrud, drawing her cousin's arm through her own, and walking with her down the room and past the centre window. Grace had sat with her back to it at table, so now perceived, for the first time, that it commanded a view of a large yard, surrounded by irregular buildings of various heights, and occupied in the centre by a huge, oblong heap, enclosed by stout posts and rails, and of a rich brown color, diversified by the straw, green branchlets, and big, whitish cabbage leaves strewn upon it. Looking back, too, at the table, she first noted distinctly the aspect of her newly-found relations.

Frau Alvsleben was a large woman, who looked as if she was superior to the restraints of stays and whalebone. She was in black, with a large, black silk flounced apron and bib, to defend her dress against all exigencies. She had fine eyes, but a somewhat coarse mouth, deficient teeth, grey hair, and a skin prematurely wrinkled for her years. Her head was covered by a three-cornered handkerchief of black lace, one point of which was raised at the back by a high comb, while the other two were tied loosely under her chin; large hands, which looked as if they did good service, and an eager, anxious expression, completed the picture impressed on Grace's mind's eye.

The two young ladies were not like each other. The eldest was rather square-shouldered and short-necked, with a huge pile of plaits and curls on her head; a broad face, with a dull, thick complexion, and light-blue, watchful eyes. Frieda was taller, slighter, and more graceful. She, too, wore her hair in a profusion of coils, curls, and plaits; but the hair itself was of a pretty, bright brown tinge, closely resembling her English cousin's: she had also fine, dark eyes, like her grandfather's, a very fair skin and delicate color, and a mouth rather like her sister's, only softer and kindlier. Both

girls wore dresses of a nondescript pale grey-blue and brown check, very tight-fitting, and many-flounced; linen collars, the corners turned over, widely open at the throat, and fastened by large bows of blue ribbon.

Grace was gratified by the frank cordiality with which both sisters received her, but she was especially attracted by something congenial in Frieda.

The three girls ascended the stair, and crossing a large landing or *Vorsaal*, entered a light and cheerful bedroom — the chocolate-brown floor, pale grey walls, and crisp, fresh white muslin curtains, making a pleasant combination. A small bedstead in a corner (which, as is usual in foreign bed-chambers, seemed an accidental intruder, instead of the chief occupant), a sofa, and a writing-table, with a tolerable square of carpet under it; handsome wardrobes or presses of dark wood, a dressing-table and small looking-glass almost buried in chintz drapery, a large oval glass between the windows; a high iron stove, of a greenish-brownish tint; some cane chairs, and a few fearfully hard oil-paintings composed the furniture and decorations. But on the table were two flower-pots, decorated with cut gold and silver paper, one containing a white azalea, the other a foreign heath — little tokens of welcome, according to the gracious German fashion, with which Grace expressed her delight, and then ran to the window, which looked towards the hills and dark pine woods; for the room was in the eastern wing, and so escaped the farm-yard and the dung-heap.

"What a charming room! and how good you are to welcome me so kindly!" cried Grace, taking a hand of each. "You cannot think how delightful it is to look out on hills and woods again, after being shut up in London!"

Frieda embraced her on the spot, but Geitrud, smiling, said, —

"I only fear it will all seem very poor and — and mean to you, after the *Pracht* — that is, the splendor you are accustomed to in England."

"But I have not been accustomed to splendor," cried Grace, laughing; "do not imagine it! I shall enjoy myself immensely here."

"I hope so," said Frieda.

"And now it is the hour of repose; let us leave the dear new cousin to rest. You will be quite refreshed by the time coffee is ready, and then we will help you to unpack."

She cast a longing look at Grace's large

box and small valise, which had already been brought up-stairs; then kissing her hand to her guest, left the room.

Fräulein Älsleben lingered for a few minutes to point out the convenient hanging-press, the *Schreibschrank* (bureau), and *commode* (chest of drawers), all of which were empty and ready for her use.

At last Grace was alone, and free to think her own thoughts. First she opened the door-like windows wide, and stood there drinking in the delicious air, the (to her) home-like look of hills and woods. Yet even nature, in a foreign landscape, has in it something unfamiliar. Something in the coloring, something indefinable in the pleasant odor of the warm air, kept up the sense of strangeness, but a strangeness she no longer dreaded. The simple kindness of her reception, the absence of all pretension, set her at ease. Here was nothing formidable, no harsh, contemptuous criticism to be dreaded. She longed to describe it all to the dear mother, and make her share the agreeable impression she had received.

After another scrutinizing look round her room, and a fruitless search for a bell, she set forth her writing materials, and placing herself on the sofa beside the writing-table, began her letter; but soon she paused, and leant back to think and select, out of the abundant stores of incident which her travels supplied, what was most worthy of record. The sofa was comfortable, the evening warm, and a monotonous clack, clack, from some machine in the farm-yard lulled her off to sleep, and she slept profoundly.

The light was beginning to lose its golden tinge, when she was roused by the entrance of Frieda, who carried a small tray, on which was a coffee-service of beautifully painted china.

"Ah, you have had a good sleep! I knocked twice on the door, and then I peeped in, and you were deeply asleep. So I left you. And now I bring your coffee; we have already drunk ours, though the dear grandpapa slept long also. Will you, please, take sugar and milk?"

"Oh, thank you!" exclaimed Grace, sitting up, and rubbing her eyes. "How good you are! Have I slept long? What o'clock is it?"

"It is nearly five o'clock, and we have our *Abendbrod* (supper) at half-seven. How do you call it? — half after six? Still, we shall have time to arrange all your *Sachen* — your things first. You will let me help you? Ach, *Gott in Him-*

*mel!*—you have slept with both your windows open!" she exclaimed, flying to shut them. "*Meine Liebe!* you will kill yourself."

"On no! I often sleep all night with the window open," said Grace, smiling, and sipping her coffee, which was hot and fresh, if not very strong, while Frieda had already unstrapped the cover of the box, and Gertrud came in to assist, so Grace drew forth her keys unresistingly.

In truth, she would have preferred unpacking alone. Her wardrobe, though in fair condition, was scarcely abundant or *recherché* enough to bear the inspection of strange eyes: but hers was no distrustful, sullen spirit; and she accepted the offered aid without demur, although curiosity had evidently no small share in her kinswoman's readiness to save her trouble.

Many were the exclamations of surprise, and some of admiration, at the treasures disclosed, at the difference of cut and the beauty of some materials, while the pointed shape of the boots and the absence of aprons excited strong disapprobation.

At length, with a vast amount of chatter and contention of a mild order Grace's box was emptied, and its contents arranged in drawers and wardrobe. During the performance she instinctively noticed a difference—a very slight difference—in the manner of the sisters. Frieda admired or found fault with equal frankness; Gertrud was less outspoken; but there was an expression of keen criticism in her look—a silent feeling of a texture here—a holding up of a trinket to the light there—a slightly contemptuous turn of the lip or toss of the head, indicative of undervaluing what was not familiar.

The shades of evening were closing when the empty box, its cover carefully stowed inside, was carried away by a stout-armed, not neat-handed Phyllis, and Grace was informed she had better make her toilette for the Abendbrod.

"Must I change my dress?"

"*Gott bewahr!*" cried Frieda, who still stayed (Gertrud had bustled away with her key-basket); "only arrange your hair, and—what you like. There is no one coming, only Herr Sturm."

"And who is Herr Sturm?" asked Grace, as she shook down her long hair previous to replaiting it.

"Heinrich Sturm is the *Verwalter*—the—oh! what you may call the farmer,

manager or inspector: in all *Ritterguts* there is a *Verwalter*. But I must put on another ribbon, and then I will return for you."

The large dining-room looked dim as the two girls entered arm-in-arm. It was lighted by a single bronze lamp of good design hung over the table, now set for supper, and shone upon the white cloth, old-fashioned silver, and high, metal-covered beer-glasses or beakers, glinting on the curves and angles of the quaint, highly polished sideboard, the *étagères* gleaming occasionally as they caught the light here and there, in the gloom of their distant corners, while the tall, sepulchral white stove loomed like a ghost in the semi-darkness.

The maid who had welcomed them was placing the supper on the table—dishes of sliced cold meat and sausages, hot potatoes served in their skins, cheese, bread and butter, sour cucumber (*i.e.* cucumber preserved with salt, and not to be despised), a large centre-dish piled with pears, and sundry small ones filled with diverse *compotes*, made a goodly array. Frau Alvsleben had already taken her place at one end of the table, knitting in hand; Gertrud was placing the finger-napkins; and Count Costello was standing in one of the windows talking with a slight young man, whose abundant fair hair was brushed back behind his ears, round which were secured a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles. He wore a morning-coat of a dark grey mixture with remarkably tight trousers of the same color. Though above middle height, he was dwarfed by the count's stately stature, and stood with an awkwardly respectful air, one huge red hand grasping a chair-back, the other stroking a rather feeble whitish-brown moustache, as if he was coaxing it to "come on."

"Come, *meine Herren!*" said Frau Alvsleben, in German; "all is ready—come to table. Here is the dear cousin." Then changing to French: "Are you rested, my dear, and ready to eat your supper? Let me introduce our good friend Herr Sturm—Herr Sturm, my kinswoman Fräulein von Frere."

Frau Alvsleben did not imagine that any relative of her father's could be less than *von*.

Whereupon Herr Sturm, coloring deeply, made a half turn, "looked full to his front," and performed a bow which presented the crown of his head exactly on a level with Grace Frere's eyes. She

felt inclined to laugh, and from an irresistible sense of fun made him a deep, solemn curtsy, which appeared to her Saxon relatives all that it ought to be. But the count held out his hand, and she sprang to his side; it was quite delightful to meet him after all these hours.

"And are you as fresh as a rose, my darling? Begad! we have both slept it out, and you look all the better! Come and sit here between Theresia and myself; we'll let Sturm have a sight of you from over the way; it's not every day he sees an English Fräulein."

So saying, the count placed her between his daughter and himself, while Gertrud took the foot of the table, and Frieda a seat to her left.

"Mr. Sturm, he speak very good English — yes," said Gertrud, as she began to distribute the potatoes.

"I spik a leetle, var leetle," returned Herr Sturm, with profound solemnity; "but shall be var glad to exercise myself."

"It is quite wonderful," exclaimed Grace, with genuine surprise, "that you all speak so well, when you can only have learned from books! I suppose you seldom speak with my uncle?"

"Not often, indeed," said Frieda, laughing; "the dear grandfather does not like my English."

"Faith! I cannot stand hearing my own tongue mangled," he returned.

"Now you have come," resumed Frieda, addressing Grace, "we shall do well."

"But I am most eager to learn German, and I hope you will help me."

"Ja, gewiss — certainly," cried Frieda; "we will begin to-morrow. Herr Sturm has a quantity of books — lesson-books to learn English with, and — and we can turn them round, you know. Is it not so, Herr Sturm? you will give us your English lesson-books for the Fräulein?"

Herr Sturm, whose mouth was full of sausage and potato, nearly choked himself in his haste to assure the young ladies that all he possessed was at their service, an effort from which he did not recover till after copious draughts of beer.

The count, though Germanized in most things, preferred grape-juice to beer; and a bottle of Hungarian wine was usually placed beside him. He was very liberal of the beverage, and insisted on every one taking a glass, whereupon there was much clinking of glasses. Then the young Verwalter rose up and made a speech in

an odd singing accent, and with a guttural fluency which surprised Grace, as she thought him too shy for such an undertaking. She longed to understand what he said, for there was a good deal of it, and the count nodded approbation at intervals. At the end, Frau Alvsleben, the speaker, and the daughters of the house cried "*Hoch!*" with much energy, and every one jumped up and ran round to clink their glasses against the count's, the young ladies and their mother kissing him at the same time, and uttering exclamations of evident endearment.

After this excitement, the evening meal progressed serenely; all were most kindly attentive to their young guest, who, after refusing *Wurst*, uncooked ham, and her-ring salad, supped well on excellent cold roast-pork, sour gherkin, and hot mealy potatoes.

"I see you have already begun to sow the *Wintersaat*," said the old general, after looking round as if in search of something, which something was supplied by Frieda, who handed him his cigar-case and matches.

"Yes," returned his daughter, "the harvest has been fine and early. Herr Sturm has had his hands full."

"Good!" said the old man, taking the cigar from his lips.

"We have narrowly escaped a misfortune, however," remarked Sturm. "The young brown horse, which you considered so valuable, got into the clover field one day, when all were busy reaping, and we thought he would have burst. We had the *Thierarst* (veterinary surgeon) from Zittau, and he did nothing; but an old shepherd from Hain cured him."

"I don't believe in old shepherds," said the count, puffing argumentatively. "A veterinary surgeon must know more."

"I only know" — began Herr Sturm, when Frau Alvsleben interrupted.

"It matters not; but I have still better news, *Vaterchen*. My nephew, Falkenberg, has exchanged into the Zittauer regiment, and by his help we have got the *Lieferungs Contract* (supply) for oats and potatoes to the garrison — it will be some three or four hundred thalers in our pocket. Wolff is a love-worthy being after all — he is quite steady now. He has paid most of his debts. I have asked him to come here to hunt."

"I wonder where he found any money to pay with," growled the count. "He has been a wild fellow, but pleasant enough — too pleasant!"



"Hans Schuman, by Schwarze Mülle, has taken two-thirds of the corn this season, and has fetched it himself, which, if I be allowed to say so, is the best bargain we have made for years."

"Indeed, my young friend has been tireless in his energies," chimed in Frau Alvsleben.

After listening intently to this conversation, hoping she might here and there catch the meaning of some word from its likeness to French or English, but in vain, Grace turned to Gertrud, and asked:

"Do you ride much? You must have a charming country for riding here."

"Yes, sometimes Frieda rides with the grandfather, but I not. It is rather too bold. I like best to stay at home; I can walk well, and go far enough in the garden and fields."

"But *you* are fond of riding, I hope," continued Grace to Frieda.

"Yes, yes, I like it immensely, and I am very brave; but the grandfather, he does not ride so often now, and Ulrich has taken away my pretty horse for himself, he liked it so much when he came last; so I have only a very young one, and it goes not nicely. But Wolff—my cousin Wolff—has promised to—to—what do you say?—make it go right."

"Break it in for you. That will be delightful! Then, perhaps, we can ride together. I don't much care what sort of a mount I have, so long as it can go. I do long for a gallop!"

"And you shall have it! *Potztausend*, you shall!" cried Count Costello, who caught the last words. "We must see about horses, mein lieber Sturm! My niece here can ride, I'll go bail."

"I doubt not, Herr Graf, but it is a difficult time; the——"

"Oh, we'll manage it," interrupted the count; "and I have a saddle for you, my darling—an English saddle, with three pommels, faith! I picked it up at poor Von Dahlheim's sale, the last time I was at Vienna; and you wouldn't believe it, but my little Frieda prefers the old two-crutch concern she learned to ride on."

"Ach Gott!" cried Frieda, "three are so uncomfortable."

While Grace was wondering why Frieda, the taller of the two sisters, was always called "little," Frau Alvsleben rose, and making her young cousin a curtsy, murmured something like "te" and "kite;" whereupon the count, also rising, took her hand in both of his, and said slowly, "*Gesegnete Mahlzeit!*—

blessed meal—that is our grace after meat."

"Is the lamp in the *Gartensaal*?" asked Frau Alvsleben.

Gertrud answered in the affirmative, and they all followed the lady of the house into a smaller room on the right of the *salle-à-manger*. It opened on the garden and had the same aspect as the one above, which had been assigned to Grace.

The walls of this apartment were painted to represent a trellis covered with vine-leaves. The furniture was extremely simple, and painted white—tables and side cabinets, or rather small presses, and rush-bottomed chairs, all were white. The curtains were of lace and old-fashioned chintz; and through the centre window Grace could see the moonlight sleeping on a terrace walk, raised a couple of steps above the garden, and furnished with sundry rustic seats. It led to the arbor at the end of the east wing, which she had noticed on her arrival that afternoon. Moreover, she perceived a piano and well-filled music-stand at one side of the room; of course her cousins were musicians—art and music are the birthright of Germans.

Frau Alvsleben had placed herself on a large sofa, behind an oval table draped with a dull grey-brown cloth of some canvas-like material, the border of which was curiously worked, and over the centre a large napkin—rather what we should call a tray-cloth—of choicest damask, like brocaded white satin, was spread diamond-wise, a finely-shaped bronze vase standing in the middle.

While Grace was taking in these details, Herr Sturm was favoring her with queries and observations in his best English, having followed her to the window.

"You have had a var long journey, miss. I wonder you can stand upright!"

"Oh! we had a nice rest at Dresden. We slept there last night, but we were too late to see the gallery. The train from Cologne does not come in till twelve, and by the time we had had breakfast and dressed, it was nearly two."

"Ach so!" returned Herr Sturm, with an air of deep interest. He had scarcely understood a word she said, and took refuge in that invaluable exclamation which means everything and anything in the mouth of a German.

"You will find it not—not var animated—lively—at Dalbersdorf. No ball, or theatre, or concert," continued



Herr Sturm; "nothing but meadows, and rocks, and trees!"

"That is what I like best. I have been shut up in London for four months, and it is quite charming to get into the country again."

"Ja, gewiss — that is, certainly."

"Bravo! bravo, Sturm! you are getting on with the language," cried the count; but Herr Sturm, with an elaborate bow, told Grace that he had "many businesses to do before he slept;" and with another obeisance to Frau Alvsleben, he left the room.

"You play the piano?" asked Grace of her eldest cousin.

"Yes; but Frieda is the musician. And you?"

"Oh I can play but little, although I like to hear it."

After a little intermittent conversation, and the exhibition of some photographs, Count Costello bade them good-night.

"I am more tired than I thought," he said. "But to-morrow I'll be all right, and open my treasures to show you what fine things I have brought you from London."

"Ach! meine liebe, liebe Grace!" cried Frieda, as soon as he was out of hearing. "I burn to know what the dear grandfather has brought us. You know, for he wrote that you and your good mamma helped him to choose. Will you not say?"

"I think you had better wait and have the pleasure of surprise," returned Grace in French, as Frau Alvsleben had asked in that language what Frieda said. Whereupon she remarked to her eldest daughter that the *Grosswater* must have bought wagon-loads, as he had brought very little money back with him. And then she said it was late — past nine o'clock; so Grace rose and bade them good-night.

Frieda escorted her to her room — ran to find her matches and a night-light, which Grace declined to use; finally, kissing her and bidding her sleep well, departed.

After a short examination of a mysterious arrangement by which the upper sheet was buttoned over the edge of a quilted silk counterpane — a few minutes' listening to the profound and solemn silence — a slight shudder at the notion of her remoteness from all she had ever known — a loving prayer to God for the dear mother and Mab — a last longing thought of them, and the unconsciousness of deep sleep crept over her.

From The Contemporary Review.  
A LAST WORD ON DISRAELI.

BY SHIRLEY.

IT must be now more than a quarter of a century since, in an article in *Fraser's Magazine*, the writer applied to Mr. Disraeli the fine lines which are to be found in the finest of our memorial poems: —

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,  
And breasts the blows of circumstance,  
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known,  
And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
To mould a mighty state's decrees,  
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And, moving up from high to higher,  
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope  
The pillar of a people's hope,  
The centre of a world's desire.

The appositeness of the application was questioned, and the closing lines are descriptive of a commanding position which Mr. Disraeli had certainly not attained, at the time; yet the last quarter of a century has seen them come true to the letter. The brilliant leader of a forlorn hope has been, for the past ten years at least, one of the most potent forces of the monarchy. Years before his death, indeed, his fame had ceased to be insular. Out of England he was the most famous of our statesmen; one of the two great figures of contemporary politics. In England we had Beaconsfield and Gladstone; in Europe they had Beaconsfield and Bismarck. And now, that potent personality has been withdrawn from the arena; and it is no longer the words of Tennyson, but of Pope, that return instinctively to the mind: —

Conspicuous scene! another yet is nigh,  
More silent far, where kings and poets lie;  
Where Murray — long enough his country's  
pride —  
Shall be no more than Tully or than Hyde!

There has been a surprising unanimity of opinion about Lord Beaconsfield in the public journals since his death. It is felt by all classes that a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel. But it seems to me that the apologetic tone in which many of the most characteristic incidents of his life have been dealt with shows that the writers have failed to grasp the governing principle, the determining force, the vital idiosyncracies of his career. We have apologies for his early Radicalism; we have apologies for his conduct to Sir

Robert Peel; we have apologies for his economical heresies; we have apologies for his Reform Bill; we have apologies for his foreign policy. *That* is the tone, for instance, which his eulogist in the leading journal adopts. If all these apologies are necessary, it is difficult to understand what is meant by the universal sorrow and sympathy that have been expressed, not only in England, but over Europe. Treated in this spirit, the character of Disraeli loses its picturesque identity—any credible likeness of the man in his habit as he lived becomes impossible—what we get is a mere *caput mortuum*. I believe (and I have enjoyed some rather unusual facilities for forming an opinion) that there is, throughout that remarkable career, from the point of view of the man himself, *an essential consistency*. I say, from *his* point of view; and that is the main matter; it is not necessary to maintain that the opinions which he held were wise or just, but only that they were sincere and his own.

More than thirty years have passed since, at our university debating societies, the character of Disraeli formed one of the stock subjects of controversy. The speeches of the majority of the members reflected the tone of the outside world, which was then ferociously unfair. Mr. Disraeli was being assailed from all sides; the Peelites were furious at the free lance who had driven them from office; the Whigs dimly recognized that a great and resolute will was marshalling the forces of their hereditary foes, and were bitter, in their icy way, against the plebeian chief who threatened their monopoly of power; the Tory squires eyed him suspiciously, and accorded him a languid and half-hearted support; the magnates of the newspaper press rudely ridiculed the political "adventurer" who had once wielded a pen. But at that time Mr. Disraeli was to *us* (there were not more than half a dozen of us, all told, if I remember rightly) what Thackeray was to Charlotte Brontë when to him, before the days of his fame, she dedicated "Jane Eyre;" we detected in him "an intellect profounder and more unique than his contemporaries had yet recognized." The smaller the sect the warmer the zeal; and the devotion which, through many disastrous years, a small band of true believers offered to Mr. Disraeli may have gained in intensity because we were *few*. There is a perilous delight in flinging oneself, heart and soul, into a losing cause, which

the martyr at least can appreciate. Then, as we followed each other into the bigger world outside the college quadrangle, we carried our "testimony" along with us—the gospel according to Dizzy, as they called it in those days. Most of us could do but little for the good cause, as we esteemed it. An occasional leader in a provincial journal, an occasional article in a London monthly—that was about the limit of our resources; though one of our number, to be sure, secured a wider influence and a larger audience; and I sometimes fancy that the change of tone and feeling which, about 1858, was perceptible in the Thunderer himself, is to be traced to the fact that a comrade, who had been rashly admitted within the temple, was then ministering on his altars. [Poor D—! He has gone over to the majority in far from triumphal fashion. By no fault of his own, it may be; for at best it is a hard life, and the rewards of letters are even more uncertain than those of politics or war. *Spes et premia in ambiguo; certa, funera et luctus.*]

My own share in this new crusade was but slight, yet it brought out to the full, in all sorts of pleasant and gracious ways, the generous nature of the man. As the years wore on, the scattered papers took shape and consistency; and at last, during 1862, in what was called a "political romance," much that had been said by us in glorification of our leader in *Fraser* and elsewhere, was presented in concrete form to the public. "Mowbray" was the real hero of this "political romance;" and Mowbray was Disraeli under a thin disguise. Some of the pages devoted to him are yet, I think, vitally recognizable,—whereas the rest of it, after brief popularity, has long since fallen dead. Here are a few sentences, taken almost at random:—

Here, then, they found one, who, though conversant with abstract systems, and with the artificial speculations of a literary life, had yet displayed an unrivalled capacity for the management of public affairs, and manifested incomparable energy, daring, and resolution, alike in the conception and in the achievement of a career. . . . Associated with the genius which Mr. Mowbray manifested in the conduct of practical politics, two features were very noticeable, especially in that intensely conscientious and imitative age. Of all its public men, in the first place, he was the only one who relied implicitly upon himself. With cold precision he struck the blow that was, perhaps, to prove the turning-point of a difficult and protracted conflict; and, when he had

done so, he was immediately content to hold his peace. . . . He had estimated the exact value of what he had achieved, and he was content in silence to abide the issue. It was from this characteristic that to many he seemed, as it were, to exert a direct and conscious control over his career, — as though he were not so much the creature of circumstances as other men, and had more thoroughly recognized and mastered the necessities of his position. He had *rehearsed* his career; and, consequently, he played his part with infinite accuracy and precision. And it was from this, moreover, that he never publicly manifested irritation, or annoyance, or vented his anger in the infelicitous language of passion. He was not moved, because he was thoroughly prepared. . . . Nor, in the next place, was it possible to mistake the *impersonal* nature of the man. There was no part of his career which did not bear a direct and intimate connection with the rest; but, whenever it had answered the purpose it was immediately designed to serve, it became detached and separated from him, — whenever it ceased to engage the active energies of his mind, he was able to criticise it with passionless historical impartiality, as an object out and apart from him, for which he was not in any wise solicitous or responsible.

Originally published in *Fraser's Magazine* during 1862, the papers were collected towards the end of the year into a presentable volume, to which a preface was prefixed. Therein it was intimated by the author that the age of dedications, like the age of chivalry, had departed. "Had these pretty solemnities," it went on, "been still in fashion, I should have ventured to inscribe a political story to Mr. Disraeli; not merely because loyalty to one's leader is the first and most neglected of political virtues; not merely because that leader is to us in England what Tully was to his countrymen in Rome — *optimus omnium patronus* — but because I recognize in him, when dealing with social and religious controversies, a breadth of aim and generosity of sentiment which I do not find in his opponents, and which comprise the best and most sterling elements of Liberalism." We were informed at the time that Mr. Disraeli was quite pleased with the devotional attitude which the book and the preface together expressed; and, certainly, in the graceful little note which accepted the dedication (if it was a dedication) there is no hint that any fault was found with the portrait that had been limned: —

Torquay, Dec. 28, 1862.

DEAR SIR, —

I am honored and I am gratified by the dedication of "*Thalatta*."

I entirely sympathize with the object of the work, which gracefully develops a tone of thought and sentiment on the prevalence of which the continued greatness of this country depends.

Believe me,

Your obliged servant,

B. DISRAELI.

There are one or two other letters to which I may here without impropriety refer, — one, especially, which throws a curiously direct light upon certain ambiguous incidents of his life. In an article in *Fraser* for May, 1864, the controversy between Lord Macaulay and Earl Stanhope (when Lord Mahon) had furnished the text for a discourse on the historical antecedents of our political parties.\* A few extracts from the article are necessary to enable the reader to follow Mr. Disraeli's commentary: —

The *gaze d'amour* which Lord Mahon undertook to defend against all comers was a somewhat startling paradox. "I cannot but pause to observe," he said, "how much the course of a century has inverted the meaning of our party nicknames — how much a modern Tory resembles a Whig of Queen Anne's reign, and a Tory of Queen Anne's reign a modern Whig." Mr. Macaulay lifted the glove. The modern Tories resembled the Whigs of Queen Anne's reign because the principles which these Whigs announced had been accepted by

\* Lord Stanhope afterwards pointed out to the writer that he had not followed the controversy to its close. "Allow me also to assure you," he wrote, on March 18, 1868, "of the gratification with which a year or two since I read the '*Campaigner at Home*.' I was only sorry that you had omitted from that interesting series of chapters the one which I had read as an article in *Fraser* as to the transmutation of the Whig and Tory parties, the controversy carried on, now thirty-five years ago, between my lamented friend Lord Macaulay and myself. Your discussion of it was, I thought, very good; and it would have been better still if you had followed it to its final close. For, if you will now refer to Lord Macaulay's second article on Lord Chatham, as published in the *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1841, and since collected in his '*Essays*,' you will find from the opening passages — enforced by a most ingenious illustration from Dante's '*Malebolge*' — that Lord Macaulay's opinion of the point at issue had come to be very nearly the same as mine. I ask pardon for having so long detained you."

I had forgotten, at the moment when the text was written, that the article of May, 1864, was one of the "*Campaigner at Home*" series — a series which, when republished, elicited another letter from Mr. Disraeli, in which there is a pleasant glimpse of life at Hughenden: —

"Hughenden Manor, July 31, 1865.

"MY DEAR SIR, —

"I am obliged to address you in your mask, for I cannot put my hand upon your letter, and therefore have lost your direction.

Mrs. Disraeli is reading your '*Campaigner at Home*,' and gave me last evening a most charming description of it.

"We brought it with us into the country. I was not surprised at her account, for I am well aware of the graceful fancies of your picturesque pen.

"Yours very faithfully,  
"B. DISRAELI."

the Tories. The Whig had remained consistent; the Tory had come over to the enemy. It may be questioned whether the retort, though supported by Macaulay's fluent and facile logic, and adorned with a wealth of pictorial illustration, is entirely satisfactory. Is it fair to assume that a party must be inconsistent because it adopts a policy which, fifty years before, it had opposed? During these fifty years the world has altered. Truth, in a political sense, is a relative term. The science of politics is not one of the exact sciences. Lord Bolingbroke correctly described the duty of a practical statesman when he said to Sir William Windham, "It is as much a mistake to depend upon that which is true, but impracticable at a certain time, as to depend on that which is neither true nor practicable at any time." In this view the Tory who votes against an extension of the franchise during one century, and who votes in favor of its extension during the next, may be acting not only with sagacity but with consistency. The Whigs did not, as a matter of fact, propose to reform the constituencies during the first half of the eighteenth century. Reform, as we understand it, was an unfamiliar idea to Somers and to Walpole. There were men of that generation who desired to subvert the constitution, and there were men prepared to defend it in its integrity; but there was no middle party. The notion of constitutional reconstruction was the growth of a later age.

Moreover, it is positively incorrect to affirm that during the early part of the eighteenth century the Whigs presented an advanced and the Tories a stationary policy. "The absolute position of the parties," Lord Macaulay remarked, "has been altered; the relative position remains the same." The proposition is directly at variance with the fact. As matter of fact, the parties *had* changed places. The order of nature had been reversed. The tail went first; the head followed. And the anomaly is easily explained. The Tories wanted power; the Whigs possessed it. The Whigs had attacked the prerogative when it was directed against themselves, but the prerogative occasioned them no uneasiness when a Whig minister was in office. Impelled by similar motives, the Tories, when an unfriendly family of Dutchmen occupied the throne, were willing to impose limitations on that kingly authority which, as an ordinance of God, had once been vehemently defended by them. So, also, with regard to the question of electoral reform. As long as the Whigs corrupted the electoral bodies, the Tories clamored for change; while the Whigs did not become reformers until the electoral bodies, under the second Pitt, went over by tens and by fifties to the Tories.

This is the commentary by Mr. Disraeli, — which, as I have said, is very curious and interesting: —

Grosvenor Gate, May 16, 1864.

DEAR SIR, —

I thank you for your article, which I received

this morning. I read your criticisms always with interest, because they are discriminative, and are founded on knowledge and thought.

These qualities are rarer in the present day than the world imagines. Everybody writes in a hurry, and the past seems quite obliterated from public memory.

I need not remind you that Parliamentary Reform was a living question with the Tories for the quarter of a century, at least, that followed the Revolution of 1688. Not only Sir William Wyndham and his friends were in favor of annual parliaments and universal suffrage, but Sir John Hinde Cotton even advocated the ballot. These were desperate remedies against Whig supremacy. It appeared to me in 1832 that the Reform Act was another 1688, and that influenced my conduct when I entered public life. I don't say this to vindicate my course, but to explain it.

So, also, I looked then — as I look now — to a reconciliation between the Tory party and the Roman Catholic subjects of the queen. This led, thirty years ago, and more, to the O'Connell affair, but I have never relinquished my purpose; and have now, I hope, nearly accomplished it.

If the Tory party is not a national party, it is nothing.

Pardon this egotism, which I trust, however, is not my wont, and believe me,

Dear sir, with respect,  
Faithfully yours,  
B. DISRAELI.

I have said enough to show the cordial relations which Mr. Disraeli maintained with *outsiders*, — with men, I mean, who were neither in, nor of the Parliamentary world; and it may be added that this pleasant facility of intercourse was maintained to the end. Just a year before he went out of office for the last time, a little brochure on the fierce philippics that were being directed against his "criminal" foreign policy elicited a word or two of graceful thanks: —

Hughenden Manor, Jan. 6, 1870.

MY DEAR SIR, —

It is capital; and worthy of the good old days of the "Rolliad" and the "Anti-Jacobin."

Yours faithfully and much obliged,  
BEACONSFIELD.

Before proceeding to discuss, with such light as we may have obtained,\* what may be called Mr. Disraeli's political code, — the principles which underlie the whole of his public life, and explain, more or less satisfactorily, its apparent and superficial inconsistencies, — it will be well to look for a moment at the *manner* of man

\* I have other letters in my possession which show Mr. Disraeli's warmth and sensitiveness of feeling in a very unexpected way; but they relate to private matters, and can only be referred to now.

he was—the *personal* qualities which distinguished him throughout his career—the weapons (so to speak) with which art and nature had armed him to make his way through “the wilderness of the world.”

One would hardly have fancied, after a passing glimpse of Mr. Disraeli in the House of Commons thirty years ago, that this was a man of quite unusual energy and resource. The face was massive indeed, but impassive; and the habitual manner spoke of indolence and languor. He was as ceaselessly vigilant as a weasel or a fox; nothing escaped that exquisitely sensitive perception; yet he looked all the time as if he were asleep. It was said long ago—it would be about the year '54, I think—that Sir Edwin Landseer had sent two pictures to the Exhibition which the hanging committee, in compliance with the rule of the Academy, prohibiting the introduction of political topics, had been compelled to reject. The pictures represented “Free Trade” and “Protection.” I forget what animal was selected to represent the genius of unrestricted competition,—possibly a group of Chicago pigs suffering from trichinosis (only the trichina was a later invention); but in a forlorn and emaciated donkey—and the venerable quadruped bore a curious resemblance to Mr. Disraeli—the principle of restriction received appropriate recognition. It is a pity, perhaps, that the Academy were so scrupulous; for in no other form could the remarkably hanging and drooping expression of his face and figure have been more aptly rendered. It was from this peculiarity, I fancy, that he always conveyed to the onlooker the notion of a man utterly bored. It is possible, of course, that these dramatic contrasts added to the ultimate effect. At all events there was something curiously calculated to arrest attention in hearing this man utter, in the presence of an august historical assembly, and in a manner languid and insipid beyond belief, the most felicitous subtleties of a critical intellect—the plainest and most lucid expositions of public law and national policy—the coldest, most bitter, direct, searching, and contemptuous irony that our mother-tongue is capable of conveying.

There can be no reasonable doubt now that Mr. Disraeli was a born leader. He belonged to the select class who are really capable of *ruling*. There are not many, in any age, to whom that supreme faculty has been accorded; and day by day their

number is diminishing. We may call such a man Macchiavelli or Mephistopheles; we may say that his aims are selfish, and that his instruments are base; but, at all events, his leadership is a real thing and not a sham. The magnetism which charms men into obedience is one of the rarest of gifts—too fine and impalpable for scientific analysis. And yet without it, in any real crisis, the world would be badly off. For it is better to have a bad government than no government at all—the existence of any government proving that the sense of order, at least, is not dead in the nation; and sheer anarchy being the most hopeless of conditions. And this was the feeling which was growing among the masses in this country when they saw how politicians failed to settle the question of Reform. The dealings of the House of Commons with the question of the franchise were bringing the monarchy into disrepute. At length, Mr. Disraeli said “This question *must* be settled;” and quietly, steadily,—watchful and imperturbable as the sphinx in Tenniel’s wonderful cartoon—he settled it. I don’t inquire now whether it was a good or bad settlement; but a settlement of any sort was an argument in favor of the monarchy. After all, this constitutional government of ours was able to *do* something, not merely to *talk* about doing it. And as any government is better than none, so it is better, I take it, to be governed by a real governor (though indifferently honest) who understands his work, than by a sham governor—however eloquent and exemplary, in other respects, the sham may be. Who has not felt, of late years, that most of our so-called rulers were accidental fixtures only—that there was no true congruity between them and the business which they had undertaken? Lord Palmerston, no doubt, had some of the superficial elements in his nature which go to form a ruler; and, with calm seas and fair skies, he really was great in his own light, dexterous way; but to a man like Disraeli, of sedate yet daring temper and boundless resource, not to be compared for a day. We have plenty of fluent orators left; but put them side by side with Disraeli in the “Iliad,” and we find that it is the Tory chief who bears a family likeness to those great, practical, politic kings of men (as distinguished from the mere *talkers*) on whom, in Eöthen’s words, “the strong, vertical light of Homer’s poetry falls.”

That a real leader must be more or less



of a poet is a proposition that Mr. Carlyle would possibly have controverted. But it is true, nevertheless. Mr. Disraeli was a poet, in the sense that he possessed a powerful imaginative faculty; not the imagination, it may be, which blossoms into poetry — into rhythm and ordered music; but the imagination which fires and kindles the intellect. A fantastic, ill-regulated imagination leads men astray; but true imagination, exalting and exciting, yet disciplining the mind, strengthens all its faculties. There is a visionary asceticism, no doubt, which reaches deep down into the life, and touches with its grotesque and whimsical colors every mood of the mind. Mr. Disraeli's romance, on the contrary, was the mere by-play of his intellect, and did not disturb his working powers — his shrewdness, his sound sense, his knowledge of men. The grosser sort of mortals will not believe that a really practical politician can be a dreamer or a visionary. But this astutest of politicians was on one side of his mind an idealist; and, hence, no small measure of his power. Hence a certain loftiness of temper, which those who knew him best instinctively recognize without being able exactly to define; hence that decisive insight into character which sent a simple colonel of engineers to lead the English army in its brilliant dash upon the remote stronghold of King Theodore; hence that felicity of epithet, that choice use of words, that "distinction" of style, in which he excelled all contemporary speakers.

Speaking generally, an imaginative man is a magnanimous man; for the larger vision of the poet is incompatible with parochial pettiness. This was eminently the case with Disraeli; his temper was sweet, and he was neither spiteful nor malignant. Yet, men who were too dense and stupid to meet him in fair fight were always harping, parrot-like, on his vindictiveness. The fine edge of his intellect scared them, and they ran away exclaiming that the blow which they could not turn was foul. But what candid friend, with the best intentions, has succeeded in producing any specific act of meanness or baseness? He hit hard; there were times when he asked no quarter and gave none; but still, upon the whole, he was a magnanimous foe, who fought above-board, who looked his enemy in the face, who was not treacherous. "He never feared the face of man;" and there are no traces in any part of his career of the *tricks* to which the coward resorts.

For, after all is said, one of the most noticeable qualities of Mr. Disraeli's intellect was its *fairness*. He was unfanatical. This neutrality of his seems to me to have sprung directly or indirectly from the idealism of which I have spoken. But whatever was the cause, the fact, I think, will not be disputed, except by the partisans who cannot see that the fine shafts of his irony were never dipped in the gall of malice or passion. At the head of a hot-tempered party stood a great neutral figure, supremely fair, tolerant, and impartial — it might be, as his enemies said, supremely indifferent.

But was the insinuation true — was it the fact that he wore his principles lightly? Most of us have what we call our principles, the sort of spiritual habit into which we were born; which we wear as we wear our clothes; and the continued reception of which does not imply any serious intellectual assent. That is one class of principles — Mr. Disraeli's unselfish loyalty to his race, for instance, was a principle belonging to a very different class. For the principle of Jewish enfranchisement he encountered much unmerited ridicule and invective; for it he was content deliberately to relinquish the highest object of his ambition. Surely *that* was a principle tenaciously adhered to and strenuously vindicated — bearing a much more direct and intimate relation to his life than "principles" commonly do. It must be confessed that Mr. Disraeli was not so oppressively serious as the modern Radical is. But the modern Radical would be a greater man if he could laugh at a joke — especially at a joke against himself. Holding that political and financial arrangements are very much matter of time and chance, Mr. Disraeli, on the other hand, could not elevate a tax into an article of faith, or the tax-gatherer into a minister of religion. And hence his "levity" was the cause of much very virtuous reprobation.

That there was an immense fund of gaiety in Mr. Disraeli's nature is true. Like old James Carlyle of Ecclefechan, he "never looked back." He did not indulge in unavailing regrets. He accepted the inevitable with unshaken composure. He would not allow blunders and miscarriages and misfortunes to touch him over keenly. He kept them at arm's-length — his spirit was not to be clouded and stifled by the too close pressure of calamity. The gaiety was quite spontaneous; at times it had to be held in check; though even in solemn public assemblies, the

mocking spirit of Puck (as in the assault on Lord Shaftesbury and his broad phylacteries) would sometimes break loose. When in Edinburgh during 1867, he had a great and enthusiastic reception from the democracy. "We did not go to bed till quite late," he said next morning. "Mrs. Disraeli and I were so delighted with our meeting, that we danced a Scotch reel" (or was it an Irish jig?) "over it in our bedroom."

Of the dauntless courage of the man it is unnecessary to speak. He did not know what timidity or weakness meant, — the careless audacities and surprises of his policy indeed implying the possession of a temper that was above fear. The speculative intrepidity which gives a peculiar charm to his books was thus the native language of a character which in the most absolute sense was self-reliant. A great critic has said that Byron was a pure elemental force in English poetry; in the same sense, we may say that Disraeli was a pure elemental force in English politics. No man was less under the sway of current influences. The authority of contemporary opinion did not enslave him as it does most of us. Of all our politicians he was the only one who dared to be eccentric. He never quailed from first to last. On the night of his death, they say, after a violent spasm of breathlessness he lay back murmuring in a low voice, "I am overwhelmed." Yet, a little later, "he raised himself from the pillows which supported him, threw back his arms, expanded his chest, and his lips were seen to move as if he was about to speak." To the friends who were at his side, the gesture was familiar — it was thus that he rose in the House of Commons to reply to Gladstone, to Bright, to Russell, to Palmerston, to Peel. The action certainly was highly characteristic. He was not beaten — he would not give in — he was still eager for the fray.\*

And it is to be noted that while he was not moved by the jeers and taunts of his foes, he was always able to resist — what is far more difficult to resist — the reproaches of his friends. He had to "educate" his party up to his own level, and full-grown men do not take their education easily. There can be no doubt, for instance, that a large majority of the Tory squires shared the opinion of Mr. Gladstone — that Jefferson Davis had created a people. But Mr. Disraeli re-

mained incredulous: he had no belief in the creative force of anarchy; the unity of America was an idea that appealed directly to his imagination; and, when the secret history of these years is written, it will be found that his firmness mainly contributed to the preservation of friendly relations with our kinsmen across the sea.

It was impossible that the literary expression of a man so gifted, whether in the senate or in the closet, whether with tongue or pen, could be otherwise than fine. It has been the fashion, all along, to speak slightly of Mr. Disraeli's novels. I cannot agree with the verdict, which seems to me essentially superficial. There can, I think, be no doubt that the later novels — not "Lothair" and "Endymion," which were written when the pen had been laid aside too long to be resumed with perfect freedom and mastery, but "Coningsby," "Sybil," and "Tancred" — disclose a supreme literary faculty of its kind. There are often, no doubt, curiously immature passages in Mr. Disraeli's writings — passages of labored and tawdry rhetoric, which are brought into unfortunate and undesirable prominence by the airy finish and eminent exactness of the setting. But such passages are rare in "Coningsby;" and in "Sybil" and "Tancred" there is all the mellowness of consummate work. Matthew Arnold complains (not unjustly) of "the hard, metallic movement" of Macaulay. But there is no hard, metallic movement, but only the soft play of life, in that gay dialogue of Disraeli's — which indeed is finer than Congreve's. Then, the irony of the novels is as delicate and incisive as the irony of the speeches — the implied and constructive irony which is the last refinement of banter, of which we see no sign in the emphatic satire of Dryden, only an occasional trace in the balanced invective of Bolingbroke and Pope, but which bursts into perfect flower in the serious books of Thackeray, and the satirical speeches of Disraeli. And the character-sketches are almost perfect in their way — painted with a force and clearness that has seldom been surpassed. One figure, especially, is worked out with pitiless consistency and untrifling scorn; Taper, Tadpole, Mrs. Guy Flouncey, Count Mirabel, and the rest, might have been drawn by Congreve; the blustering baseness of Rigby is worthy of Ben Jonson alone.

The literary excellence of the *speeches* is quite as remarkable. Such airy quizzing, such good-natured banter, such bril-

\* According to another version his last words were, — "Is there any bad news in the *Gazette*?" which reminds one of Pitt.

liant *chaff*, was never before heard in the House of Commons. The invective against Sir Robert Peel is somewhat overdone, perhaps; but the lighter sketches of Wood, and Russell, and Palmerston, are inimitable; and it may confidently be affirmed that, in the fine but dangerous science of Parliamentary fence, Mr. Disraeli has had no rival since Bolingbroke.

It may be true, it *is* true, that the eloquence of the demagogue—meaning thereby the eloquence of the man who can sway the *demos* by the magic of consummate speech—was not within the reach of Disraeli. It is notorious, however, that the strongest men fail as he did, and for the same reason. The magic which bewitches the multitude is (so to speak) the melody of the Æolian harp,—it is the *wind* itself incarnated into articulate music. So that the men who wield it are generally deficient in native insight, in independent force, in tough moral fibre; and their golden words remind us less of the Sermon on the Mount, than of the song of the Lurlei,—the voice whose fatal sweetness, in union with no responsible will, lures men, to their destruction, into the depths.

That Disraeli's speaking raised the tone of the House of Commons, which before his time was growing *slovenly*, is generally admitted now. He showed in it that the weapons of the old orators had not lost their cunning; that wit and ridicule, and choice words, and the fire of genius, were still potent factors in human affairs. Already, indeed, the House of Commons is not what it was when he left it. That light, gleaming weapon of his—so dainty, so airy, so impalpable, and yet so deadly—not only silenced rudeness and violence; it made such things impossible. They were forced to admit that they were vulgar, incongruous, and out of place; and they slunk away to more congenial haunts. But now the bores and the pedants and the obstructionists have taken heart of grace; and after nights of confused clamor, when patience and reticence, and self-respect and self-restraint have been cast off like an old cloak, not alone from the members of the opposition will the cry be heard—"O for one hour of Disraeli!"

A great speech by Mr. Disraeli is a study in itself. A collection of them will be made some day, and whoever aspires to become an orator, will do well to read, mark, and inwardly digest them. Meanwhile, here is one lying at hand—a reprint of the speech on the labors of the

session, delivered in August, 1848, which has much of the lightness, brightness, and deftness of his best mood. The ministry had been complaining of the loquacity of the House of Commons. Mr. Disraeli undertook to vindicate the House; and in a footnote I have tried, very ineffectively I fear, to bring together one or two of the salient points of an address which absolutely sparkles with epigram.\*

\* He began by stating that the charge had been preferred, not only by individual members, but by the official organ of the ministry. Lord John Russell here inquired if it was the *London Gazette*. "No," said Mr. Disraeli, "it was not the *London Gazette*, but a journal to which far more momentous official secrets were entrusted." And then, with becoming solemnity and amid roars of laughter, he proceeded to read the extract: "'We have authority to state' (of course, if it was a forgery the Treasury Bench could contradict the statement) 'that the fish-dinner which was fixed for the 19th, is postponed till the 26th. This postponement is occasioned by the vexatious discussions in the House of Commons, the mania for talk among the members,' etc. This was the key-note of the speech; and the speaker then proceeded to show that the delay had been solely occasioned by the incapacity of ministers themselves, Sir Charles Wood being the chief culprit. The chancellor of the exchequer had commenced his labors by advising the directors of the Bank of England to break the law, and he had continued ever since to cackle over the achievement.

"I scarcely know to what to compare his conduct, except something that occurs in a delightful city of the south. A procession moves through the streets, in which the blood of a saint is carried in a consecrated vase. The people throng round the vase, and there is a great pressure, as there was in London at the time to which I am alluding. This pressure in time becomes a panic, just as it did in London. It is curious that in both cases the cause is the same—it is a case of congealed circulation (laughter). Just at the moment when unutterable gloom overspreads the population, the chancellor of the exchequer—I beg pardon, the Archbishop of Taranto, announces the liquefaction of St. Januarius's blood, as the chancellor of the exchequer announces the issue of a government letter; in both instances a wholesome state of currency returns; the people resume their gaiety and cheerfulness, the panic and the pressure disappear, everybody returns to music and macaroni, as in London everybody returns to business; and in both cases the remedy is equally efficient, and equally a hoax (laughter and cheers)."

Mr. Disraeli then proceeded to narrate the history of the successive budgets which the chancellor had subsequently introduced and withdrawn. Some time ago they had had the government of all the talents; this was the government of all the budgets. In spite of the great events that had since occurred in Europe, he still recollected the first budget. It was communicated to the House by the prime minister in person. Tamworth itself could not have arranged a programme more magnificent and more solemn. But its main proposal—that the income tax should be doubled—was greeted with a howl of resentment. So it was necessary to withdraw Budget No. 1, and the chancellor of the exchequer was put forward to explain the speech of his chief. Mr. Disraeli had listened with delight to the classic eloquence of the premier, and had no notion that his exposition had been enveloped in such a Theban mist. But the chancellor of the exchequer was the man to put a thing right (loud laughter). So the first budget was withdrawn; a second was thereafter presented to them in the handsomest manner; later on, a third, of the nature of an impromptu to be sure, was thrown carelessly on the table; and at last, in July, the fourth was produced.

"Alas for this fourth budget! I shall never forget the scene. It was a dreary moment. It irresistibly reminded me of a celebrated character who, like the chancellor of the exchequer, had four trials in his time,

So much for the man; what then were the principles which inspired the whole of his public life, and which explain, more or less completely, its apparent and admitted inconsistencies? The cardinal articles of his creed were (1) that it is the *character* of a nation which makes and keeps it great; and (2) that it is the first business of a statesman to wage war against the evil habits and the false opinions which by sapping and enfeebling the national character, produce cowardice, corruption, and effeminacy. But the statesman's functions do not end here,—it is necessary, moreover, that a high conception of national duties and national responsibilities should be maintained among the people. In short, the preservation of our position as one of the governing races of mankind was—from first to last—the *motive* of his political career.

It was, he considered, the vice of the time that these cardinal principles of statesmanship had been lost sight of by our rulers. The extension of education was the panacea of one set of politicians; the extension of the suffrage of another set; the disestablishment of the Church of a third; the adoption of the ballot of a fourth; and so on. Now, in Mr. Disraeli's view, all this was beside the mark.

and whose last was the most unsuccessful—I mean the great hero of Cervantes when he returned from his fourth and final expedition. The great spirit of Quixote had subsided (laughter); all that sally of financial chivalry which cut us down at the beginning of the session, and which cantered over us in the middle, was gone (laughter). The villagers, like the Opposition, were drawn out to receive him: and Cervantes tells us that although they were aware of his weakness, they treated him with respect (great laughter). His immediate friends—the barber, the curate, the bachelor Sampson Carasco" (here the speaker glanced along the Treasury Bench)—"were assembled, and with demure reverence and feigned sympathy they greeted him, broken in spirit, and about forever to renounce those delightful illusions under which he had sallied forth so triumphantly; but just at the moment when everything, though melancholy, was becoming—though sad was in the best taste—Sancho's wife rushes forward and exclaims, "Never mind your kicks and cuffs, so you've brought home some money." (Cheers and laughter.) But this was just the thing that the chancellor had not got. (Cheers!)"

No, there had been no obstruction to business on the part of the House, though, to be sure, the year 1848 had furnished plenty of material for obstruction, had they chosen to use it. "During the ten months we have been sitting here there has been sedition in England, insurrection in Ireland, and revolution in Europe. I should like to have seen the Whigs in Opposition with such advantages as these (cheers and laughter)." The peroration is one of the finest to be found in Mr. Disraeli's speeches; but it is only when taken in connection with the rest of the speech that its full artistic effect is appreciated. Throughout the whole of that easy and artless prattle, so innocent, so charming, so ingenuous, the orator has been steadily working up to the climax. It is the case of Congreve's heroine,—

"Artless she is with artful care,  
Affecting to seem unaffected."

Mr. Lowe had said that an uneducated people was unfit to govern itself,—which was true in certain technical senses; but, after all, character was greater than culture. Education was immensely important, no doubt; but education would never make a people great, if the national character was weak and unstable. The capacity for greatness must run in the blood of the people, as it had run in the Greek, the Hebrew, the Roman, and the Teutonic races. Mr. Disraeli had confidence in the character of the English people, to whatever station they belonged. We had been a great, reasonable, moderate, moral people for a good many hundred years past, and the weight, and gravity, and deliberate justice of our national character had always, and would always control our legislation. The idea of the delirious levities of a French Revolution being transacted among ourselves, was one which he could not realize. If we did come to revolution, we would accomplish it soberly and gravely,—*"sadly,"* as Froissart says, after the manner of our countrymen. We might be reasonably certain at least, that even household suffrage would not induce the lower to chop off the heads of the upper classes—could not possibly lead to Robespierre and the guillotine. "For my part I have faith in the people of England—in their genius, and in their destiny."

But it appeared to Mr. Disraeli, when he entered public life, that the national character was in grave peril. The mean modern spirit was infecting and contaminating the high spirit of the past. England was ceasing to be the England of Elizabeth, of Cromwell, of Chatham, of Pitt. The maxim of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest had supplanted the old heroic watchwords of a people who could not brook defeat, and who had withstood a world in arms. The high spirit of an imperial race, without which, as Burke had said, "your army would be a mob, and your ships no better than rotten timbers," had been enfeebled by success. The generous ideals of a great nation had been buried out of sight, and the people were being taught that to vote at elections and to make money as fast as possible were the conditions of national happiness. In Disraeli's view this teaching was radically unsound. England would fall as Tyre had fallen, as Venice had fallen, if the sordid maxims of the money market were permitted to replace the wider conceptions of national well-being which our

forefathers had cherished. So he would have the nation touched to finer issues—he would appeal to the imagination, the loyalty, the religion, the venerable traditions, the obedient valor of a great race; and, drawing assurance from the past, would seek security for the future. This was Disraeli's conception of the new crusade, which he and his friends were to undertake; and which, of course, could only be worked out in this country through a Parliamentary career. It was necessary, therefore, that he should attach himself to one of the great political parties; and, on the whole, even on the showing of their opponents, the high spirit of the English of Agincourt and the Armada was best represented by the party which, within living memory, had been led by Canning and by Pitt.

Now, if we keep this key-note steadily before us, I do not think that we shall find much difficulty in disposing of most of the worst charges that have been brought against Mr. Disraeli.

1. The youthful affinity with Radicalism may, on one side, as he has pointed out in the letter already quoted, be traced to his antipathy to the Whigs. To the hard, dry, unimaginative Whigs he had no doubt a mortal dislike. Their solemn fumbling with difficult questions had the same effect on him that the "somject" and "omject" of poor old Coleridge had on Carlyle. The Whig nobles were to his mind a modern edition of the Venetian oligarchy in its decline, and their conceptions of the scope of national life were as bare, meagre, and barren. Nor to youthful enthusiasm does the *civitas Dei*, which Radicalism seeks to reach, appear so hopelessly far away; it is later in life that we discover that the holy city is far less accessible than we had fancied. But it is pretty clear that the moment Disraeli found out what economical Radicalism meant, as embodied in the persons of Joseph Hume and his friends, he beat a speedy retreat from their camp. *That*, at all events, was not Jerusalem.

It is not at all surprising, indeed, looking to his early schooling, or lack of schooling, that his first essays in practical politics should have been somewhat erratic. He was hardly a child of our prosaic England,—either by temperament or by training. The public school and the university knew him not. Sole sitting by the shores of old romance—at Venice, at Damascus, on the plain of Troy, in the desert—he had worked out the puzzles of life according to his own

lights, and had rehearsed a career. He was intoxicated with youth, with genius, with the memories of the past that were round about him, with his own vivid sense of the future that was in store for him. What a life!—passion and poetry tempered by epigram; but scarcely a fit preparation for a seat on a back bench of the House of Commons, or for a steady-going hack in official harness.

2. But, if he naturally gravitated to the Tories, as the only possible party to which he could ally himself, it must have been clear from the first that any cordial alliance between Sir Robert Peel and this brilliant dreamer was out of the question. It has been said that he was willing enough to serve under Peel,—which is probably true enough. He knew the conditions of public life in England, and would have worked with Peel as with others. But it would have been against the grain; for the antagonism between the two men was vital. Disraeli was, in certain moods, as much a Bohemian as Heine; and Peel was a Philistine of the Philistines. The rupture between the timid Harley and the daring Bolingbroke was, in the nature of things, not more inevitable. Sooner or later, it must have been war to the knife. How was agreement possible between the pure naked intellectual force of Disraeli and the timid empiricism of Sir Robert? And Disraeli had his special grievance—Sir Robert had infected the party which he led with his own timidity. That party, as we have seen, was identified with the high spirit and the masterful traditions of England; but, under the manipulation of Peel, it had come to be only a weak reflection of the faction which it opposed. It resisted change; but only in a deprecatory, half-hearted way. It could not deny that Catholic Emancipation, Reform, Irish Disestablishment, were all good things in their way—though not to be had just yet, or until the pressure was a little more severe. It was thus a negation of policy—"a sort of humdrum hocus-pocus in which the order of the day was moved to take in a nation." The merciless severity of the attack on Sir Robert has been often reprobated; but, after all, it proceeded on intellectual and not on personal lines. It was the intellectual poverty of the policy which roused his scorn. A statesman?—why, a statesman was a man who connected himself with some great idea, not a man who trimmed his course according to the weather. Such a man was as much a great statesman as the man who got up



behind a carriage was a great whip. In all the dreary pages of Sir Robert's interminable talk reported in "Hansard," there was not a single happy expression, nor a single original thought—his whole life, indeed, had been one great appropriation clause. And now, he had found the Whigs bathing, and had run away with their clothes! Then look at his Parliamentary tactics. Whenever he had a big measure to introduce, he was sure to rest it on the smallest precedents; he was always tracing the steam-engine back to the tea-kettle; in fact, all his precedents were "tea-kettle" precedents. Of course the charge of betraying his friends was urged more than once; but even Sir Robert's warmest admirers could not deny that he had deserted his party. Like the Turkish admiral, who after being embraced by the sultan and prayed for by the muftis, he had steered his fleet straight into the enemy's port. The Turkish admiral, to be sure, had been much misunderstood and misrepresented. He, too, had been called a traitor. But he vindicated his conduct. He said: "True it is, I did place myself at the head of this valiant armada—true that my sovereign embraced me, and that all the muftis in the kingdom prayed for the success of the expedition. But I had an objection to war; I saw no use in prolonging the struggle; and the only reason for my accepting the leadership was, that I might terminate the contest by betraying my master." This is pungent and incisive criticism no doubt; but does it exceed the license of fair Parliamentary invective? Sir Robert was wounded to the quick: he winced visibly under the attacks, and spoke of them "in moments too testy for so great a man to indulge in." But the scorn was perfectly genuine; the satire, though direct and cutting, was entirely impersonal; and the mute reproach of a party which felt that it had been betrayed was sure to find expression sooner or later. *Si tu oblitus es, at Di meminerunt, meminit Fides.* But it was certainly unlucky for Sir Robert that the greatest master of irony in our tongue should have been in Parliament at the time.

3. What has been already said will explain the attitude of Mr. Disraeli to the doctrines of the Manchester economists. Free trade might or might not be in accordance with the immutable laws which govern the universe; but it was quite clear to his mind that a school which ostentatiously aspired to make England the market-place of the world, and nothing

more, had misread the lessons of history. Nations do not live on bread alone, and the politicians who proclaimed that material prosperity was better worth living for than heroic ideas were sapping the springs of national greatness. "I see no reason why you, too, should not fade like the Tyrian dye, and moulder like the Venetian palaces."

4. That Mr. Disraeli should, by the Reform Bill of 1867, have introduced household suffrage, is sometimes considered the crowning proof of his want of principle. We have seen that there was no particular reason why Reform should be considered the exclusive preserve of the Whigs. Nor was there any reason why the Tory party in 1867 should have been anxious to abide by the tentative settlement of 1832. That settlement had given the government to their rivals; during the thirty-five years that had elapsed they had not been in office for seven. Many of the ablest of the party, moreover, had objected to Reform, not on grounds of principle, but because they held that a continual *tinkering*, an annual disturbance of the Constitution was inconvenient and dangerous. These men had maintained that, in the mean time, the suffrage should be left untouched, but that when a change became inevitable, it was for the interest of the nation that a permanent settlement should be effected; and at any figure below household suffrage they found no principle of permanence. Nor can it be denied that throughout his whole political career Mr. Disraeli had held this view. He held that the settlement of 1832 was a Whig settlement; that it had swept away the early popular franchises; that the old alliance between the country party and the people should, if possible, be restored. "If the Tory party is not a national party, it is nothing." All this is on record; and the reader who will turn to the debates on the first Reform Bill will find that Sir Robert Peel, in somewhat different words, had even then said the same thing. Neither the leaders nor the party they led can, in this view, be fairly accused of immorality when, in 1867, perceiving that Reform had become a State necessity, they boldly determined to *settle* the question—for a generation at least. The time had come when a calculated rashness, an intrepid and generous confidence, constituted the truest prudence.

But to Mr. Disraeli such a change was acceptable on other grounds. The stolid ten-pounder, in whom the franchise had

been vested, was of all classes in the country the least accessible to ideas. There might be danger in the "leap in the dark;" but, to leave the future of the country in the hands of men who present (in Mr. Arnold's words) "a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, and a low standard of manners," was certain death. If it be true that political institutions rest on national character, an institution resting on a character like *that* was obviously in a very hopeless condition. It is possible that Mr. Disraeli, with his immense conviction of the importance of character to a nation, may have entertained an undue contempt for the working machinery of the Constitution. Political arrangements and contrivances were valuable in his eyes only in so far as they enabled the classes which were most accessible to the idea of national greatness to wield political power. In this sense he was the most radical of our statesmen; a £10 franchise, a £5 franchise, household suffrage, manhood suffrage—what did it matter, so long as the end was attained?

5. It has been said, indeed, that his policy towards Ireland was exceptionally feeble and colorless. On the contrary, it seems to me to have been the only policy that of late years has had any chance of success. We have been governing Ireland for some time according to "Irish ideas," and we are beginning to reap what we have sown. A very plentiful harvest of "Irish ideas" is now in the market. But according to Mr. Disraeli's view, Ireland was an imperfectly civilized country, in which every germ of civilization needed to be vigilantly guarded. "What always strikes me as a general principle with regard to Ireland is, *that you should create and not destroy.*" The logic of Lord Macaulay on the Irish Church question, for instance, might be absolutely unanswerable; but there were deeper issues involved than logic would solve. If we destroyed the Irish Church, we destroyed an organization which not only restrained the fanaticism, but stimulated the culture, of an imperfectly developed society. "Religious equality" was a plausible, if ambiguous, watchword; but religious equality in Ireland meant religious intemperance, religious anarchy, religious riot. The Irish Church, from the peculiarities of its position, had become in many districts simply a lay institution devoted to charitable and unsectarian purposes. The

parson in such communities was nothing more than an Irish or English gentleman—better educated, less fanatical, more liberal-handed than his neighbors; and the "Protestant ascendancy" meant only the natural ascendancy of skill and energy and intelligence over ignorance and indolence and superstition—the inevitable ascendancy of strong, sensible, God-fearing men. At the same time the Catholic Church itself was another bulwark against the anarchy of barbarism; and its ministers should have been attached to the State by the ties of interest and gratitude. "So, also, I looked then, as I look now, to a reconciliation between the Tory party and the Roman Catholic subjects of the queen. I have never relinquished my purpose, and have now, I hope, nearly accomplished it." It is a thousand pities that he failed. For the rest, he would have sent a "lord high deputy" across the Channel with "full powers," and instructions to give every man justice, and justice only,—justice meted out with inexorable impartiality,—justice that cordially encouraged virtue, sobriety, industry, thrift,—justice that sternly repressed mendacity, anarchy, self-indulgence.

6. The foreign policy of Lord Beaconsfield between 1876 and 1880 was, in point of fact, the realization on a great scale of all his previous teaching. England had been effaced in Continental Europe; she was again to speak with the voice of Chatham and of Pitt. The stimulating inspiration of imperial duties and imperial responsibilities was again to appeal to the conscience of the people.

That Mr. Disraeli was "un-English" was the monotonous refrain of Mr. Grant-Duff's vacation soliloquies. "Mr. Disraeli is an Englishman because he will, not because he must. His outer life is identified with ours, but his inner life belongs to another race and to another history. All English politics are to him only a game." But, seriously speaking, the kind of talk which makes Mr. Disraeli a sort of Bedouin sheik who has just stepped out of the desert into our drawing-rooms, scarcely deserves the name of criticism. The critic who fancies that a man whose father and grandfather were English citizens cannot be an Englishman because he has a dash of alien blood in his veins, must know little of ethnology. It is possible, indeed, that such a man may not be so insular in his prejudices as a Cumberland squire. He is by race, perhaps, more a citizen of the world. But it is clear, looking to his whole career, that

Mr. Disraeli was inspired throughout by a sense of the greatness of England; that the spectacle of this famous, historical world-wide dominion fascinated his imagination; and that, in his foreign as in his domestic policy, he was animated by no mean or unworthy ambition, but by the profound conviction that he was adding to her security and her renown.

The imperial and the parochial types of character have always been sharply opposed; and, in the mean time, the former is under a cloud. The policy of "brag and bluster" has been succeeded by one which is supposed to be better adapted to the necessities of commerce. Whether the one or the other will best secure the ultimate well-being of the empire is a question that need not now be discussed. The opinion of Europe, indeed, has been already expressed in no measured terms. "Brag and bluster!" said the Regierungsrath of Sauerkraut to me a year ago, as we were sailing up the Königsee: "Brag and bluster! And why not? What is the good of appealing to a polar bear in honeyed accents? Brag and bluster, indeed! Don't you see, *mein guter Freund*, that these were the only arguments the barbarians could understand? If the clamor of vindictive philanthropy had not drowned and discredited the plain speaking of your prime minister, the czar would have thought once, twice, and thrice before he started for Constantinople. To philander with philanthropy may be a cheap amusement in quiet times; but when a hundred thousand lives are sacrificed to its cultivation, it becomes a costly and poisonous luxury. The sinister forces with which he had to contend may have proved too strong for Lord Beaconsfield; foreign foes and domestic faction may have prevented him from doing all that he designed; but in a great world-crisis he bore himself steadfastly, patiently, strenuously, heroically; and he imparted his own spirit to England. And more than that, *mein Herr*, much more if your people had but known it, your patriot minister, in his struggle with the barbarian, had all free Europe at his back."

So far the Regierungsrath of Sauerkraut; but the Regierungsrath is only a German Liberal, and not an English Radical. The British Radical knows better; his animosity to imperialism is unappeased and unappeasable; and even in the grave his victims are not safe. At all events, the proposal to erect a monument to Benjamin Disraeli in that historic tem-

ple of our race, "where kings and poets lie," ought not to have been entertained. The nice susceptibilities of Mr. Labouchere and his friends below the gangway should have been consulted. Well, it does not much matter to us, or to — *him*. He has a more lasting monument in the heart of England; and the memory of a great career will outlive the bronze and marble of the Abbey.

His voice is silent in your council-hall  
Forever; and, whatever tempests lour,  
Forever silent; even if they broke  
In thunder, silent; yet remember all  
He spoke among you, and the man who spoke.

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From Blackwood's Magazine.  
MATTIE:

#### THE HISTORY OF AN EVENING.

A DULL and tiresome October afternoon was passing away in what was too plainly a fit of the sulks, to admit of hopes being entertained, even by the most sanguine, that it would have any pleasant or inspiring termination.

Wednesday is not the worst day in the week for events to happen upon. There is no possible reason why a startling piece of news should not reach one's ear on a Wednesday — why a budget of interesting letters should not arrive by the post on a Wednesday — why an unexpected turn of good fortune should not befall one on a Wednesday; but somehow, upon this particular Wednesday, the idea of anything occurring to break the monotony of its wearisomeness seemed absolutely preposterous to one, at least, of the persons with whom we have to do, — the mistress of Castle Cairntree, a lonely mansion on the Scottish coast. Mrs. Boscawen was an invalid, who, whatever she might have been in the bloom of her youth and health, was, with shattered nerves and impaired temper, susceptible of every outward influence, more especially when it was of a depressing or irritating nature. On the day in question she was so much tormented by the ceaseless drone of the wind, varied as it was merely by the rattle of the passing showers which drifted from time to time overhead, that by five o'clock she was only anxious to get rid of the remaining daylight, and try what closed shutters, large fires and candles could do towards restoring the aspect of things around her to that comfort which aided so materially her own cheerfulness.

The notion of comfort was certainly somewhat at variance with the outward appearance of the thin grey tower with its modern wings, which, according to the fashion of the district, was dignified by the appellation of "Castle." There was little of grandeur, still less of beauty, in its appearance; the site was poor, the country around barren, — in short the former laird, who had prided himself on the handsome manner in which he had restored and enlarged the old place, would have done his successors better service by razing it to the ground, and building another in its stead. Draughty, troublesome, ill-constructed, however, as the mansion was, it was endeared to its present owner by association and possession; and consequently, by the aid of thick curtains, double doors, carpets, and endurance, his wife contrived to exist, and even to be satisfied with her home. Her standing grievance — namely, her being unable to accompany her daughters into society — did not perhaps embitter her existence as much as she would fain have had it supposed that it did. To lie on her sofa in the little sitting-room which was the one really luxurious apartment in the house, to keep herself warm in winter and cool in summer, to trifle with her needlework, and dabble amongst her correspondence, with intervals of desultory chit-chat as her husband and children went in and out of the chamber, — this was the sort of routine which, to confess the truth, suited Mrs. Boscawen to a hair's breadth; and it was scarcely more from necessity than from predilection that she had softly, and by gentle gradations, sunk into it.

But then it was necessary to the preservation of her spirits and general equanimity, that the machinery of the family and household should work smoothly, that perplexities should not be allowed to embarrass, or vexations to annoy, whilst, at the same time, agreeable interruptions were especially valued, as giving a fillip to the languid hours.

Whether the letter which was put into her hand as daylight waned on the day whose length and dreariness she had repeatedly bemoaned, was to prove a source of pleasure or of trouble, remained to be seen; but at the moment of receiving it, the lady was certainly roused to curiosity. More than curiosity, more than mere ordinary interest, was visible on the countenance of the tall girl by her side, whose eyes by turns regarded the sheet and perused the expression on her mother's

face, and who betrayed by the varying color in her cheek and by the nervous clasp and unclasp of her hands, a certain anxiety and agitation which she was endeavoring otherwise to conceal. Fortunately for the attempt she was not exposed to the scrutiny of a keen observer, for if Mattie's face had declared what was passing in Mattie's bosom, it would have been a sad piece of work. Mrs. Boscawen would have jumped off her sofa in surprise and bewilderment, and the letter and all it contained — But never mind, let us confine ourselves to what really did happen, and not fritter away our time in idle conjectures.

The weather having been so depressing, and the day monotonous to both mother and daughter, a little event out of the common, a trifling incident of this kind, was exactly the right thing, coming at the right time, — and at the first brush the parent appeared to be the more eager of the two in discovering its nature; but no sooner had the contents of the note been mastered, and its object understood, than she relapsed into her usual state of nervous indecision and querulousness.

"I wish Adelaide or Julia were here," she said. "So tiresome of them to be out just when they are wanted. I knew something would be sure to happen when they were out of the way. It always does."

Her companion was silent.

"What o'clock is it, Mattie?"

"Nearly five, mamma."

"They will surely be here soon. But what is to be said? You see what your aunt wants — you to go there with the rest to-night, and take Douglas's place at the dinner-table. I suppose you will have to go. You would like to go?"

"Yes, mamma."

"Ridiculous to send over at such an hour; it gives one no time to consider —" The door opened. "What! An answer wanted?" exclaimed Mrs. Boscawen, with the startled air of one unaccustomed to sudden demands. "But, Boyd, how can I send one? Stop a moment, — Mattie, speak; what is to be done?"

"What do you mean, mamma?" said her daughter gently. "What is it that you —"

"Don't you see, my dear? Boyd, *you* understand; Miss Adelaide is not come in yet; the man must wait."

"His orders is to be back immediately, ma'am. I don't think the young ladies can be in yet a while, ma'am."

As he spoke, Boyd glanced at Miss Mattie, whose elder sisters were the delinquents, and whom he, in common with the rest of the household, had as yet scarcely learned to take into account. Only a few months before she had returned to them from her foreign school, almost a stranger; and in what ways, and to what extent, she might be depended upon, had yet to be found out. Boyd himself had carried the fair maid in his arms as a baby, and was jealous as a parent of her dignity and her honor, — but he was not sure that she was to be trusted with the ink-bottle on the present occasion. Lady Turner, to whom a note had to be written, was a person of great importance to the Boscawen household; and Miss Mattie was just Miss Mattie, who never put herself forward, never was sent for when visitors were in the drawing-room, never was taken into council on any matter of consequence, — from whom, in short, nothing was expected but unobtrusive, dutiful acquiescence in all things soever that might be ordained by the ruling powers.

As she stood meekly by, offering no suggestion, Boyd and his mistress alike debated what was to be done.

Mrs. Boscawen was the first to speak, having naturally the most at stake; whatever Boyd might think, she was not going to get off her sofa and set herself to the task of writing, just when she was feeling particularly low, and nervous, and wretched, — startled, too — anything sudden was always so tiresome and startling. Mattie must surely be able to pen a few words that would not disgrace her — Mattie, on whose education so much had been spent, and who was, as it were, just off the irons. She felt, all at once, that it was foolish to have hesitated; and without permitting herself to reflect further, or even to consult the grey-headed dependant, who stood waiting, with her eye, observed decidedly, "Then, Mattie, my dear, you must go to the writing-table."

She need not have feared, however, that any intervention would be offered. Boyd had come to the same conclusion as his mistress ere he respectfully withdrew; for although he shook his head wisely outside the door, and prognosticated no great things of the performance now to be gone through, he felt that the emergency was extreme. The groom was impatient, the light was going: under such circumstances, and since, although he stopped at every window along the gallery to peer out, in hopes of seeing Miss Adelaide and

Miss Julia, they were not anywhere in view, the risk must be run.

"Now, Mattie," said her mother, brightening up in spite of herself at the novelty of the proceeding, "have you got proper paper? Don't put too much on one page, my love; a note should never be compressed. And a few lines are all that is needed, just to say that my poor head is so bad to-day that I have made you my deputy correspondent since your sisters are out; and —"

"Stop a moment, please, mamma," interposed Mattie.

"Write it nicely, my dear; your aunt is a great observer of little things."

"Yes, mamma. I am ready now."

"Then you must thank her, and say I am very happy that you should accept her kind invitation. I cannot understand her asking you, nevertheless," added Mrs. Boscawen; "for certainly one of the young Hamiltons or Wrays would have filled Douglas's place better than you. You cannot fill a man's place. How can you hand — Well, well, I won't speak; and it does not signify, either; it is your aunt's own affair if her table is disarranged. How are you getting on, my love?"

How she was getting on the youthful scribe could scarcely tell herself. Pretty well, she thought. Her fingers might tremble, and her heart beat, but the page before her was neither blotted nor blurred. With some complacency she surveyed the whole, ere she carried it to the sofa for inspection, and watched for the effect it would produce, much as she had been wont to anticipate the commendation so fair and even an exercise would have won at school.

It was this gentle glow of self-approval manifested in her daughter's countenance which checked the "My dear child!" just rising to the parent's lips.

She looked at Mattie, looked at the letter, and looked up again with a smile.

All at once the fair young face was suffused with color. "Is it not right, mamma? Will it not do?"

"Well, my love, ye—es, it will 'do,' I dare say. It is not a *very* good note, you know, Mattie, — not like Adelaide's or Julia's notes; but your aunt will understand to make allowances, and perhaps she may not look at it much," — turning the sheet over in her hands dubiously; then, with a start, "My child, you have spelt correspondent with one *r*!"

"Give it me, mamma, quick. I can put that in easily."



"Softly, my love; don't be in too great a hurry. Yes, you can slip it in very well in the corner—at least you must do it as well as you can; you would not like to write it over again? Come here, let me show you. All these little sentences at the end,—all this part—'Believe me, your affectionate niece, Matilda Boscawen,' should be in distinct, short lines,—not running into one another as you have made them do. Do you understand? Then here again"—turning to the page before—"you should have begun afresh here—made a new start with a large *M*. A note or a letter ought not to be filled up like a copy-book. Of course, I could not see to direct you in this respect; and the phrases are all very well,—you have said exactly what I told you; but these trifling points, the knowing where to stop and where to begin—and your lines should be a great deal further apart besides,—all this is of importance to the look of the thing. And let me tell you, my dear, that to write a good note should be one of a woman's chief accomplishments."

"But what *am* I to do?" sighed Mattie.

"Let it go for this time," unexpectedly rejoined her mother, who, having had the satisfaction of pointing out the defects, felt, as many other people would, that they were not worth further trouble. "Remember what I said for another occasion, my love; and now, ring for tea."

"I am to send this?"

"Dear me, yes, there is no help for it." Such relapses into fretfulness were not uncommon to the speaker. "It must go, I suppose. What are you doing now?"

"Directing the envelope, mamma."

"Is that still to be done? Then could you not just take out a fresh sheet, and— But, no! I am so tired I really cannot go over it all again. No, I cannot look at the direction, my head aches too much. Take it down-stairs yourself, like a good child; and don't let me have Boyd fussing in and out of the room more than can be helped."

The door was scarcely heard to close behind the departing messenger, it slid so softly into its socket. But once outside, it was the flight of a terrified bird that brought Mattie to the bottom of the great staircase, across the hall, along the passages, till she found her object. Boyd, she guessed, would not be far to seek; and sure enough, though her light footsteps left no sound, he caught the rustle of her dress, and emerged from a door-

way, ere she had considered by what means to summon him.

The letter was now taken from Mattie's hands, and scarce a minute elapsed ere her listening ear caught the sound of a horse's hoofs pass beneath the window where she stood on the watch, and she saw the groom despatched by Lady Turner trot quickly out of sight.

A sigh of ecstasy burst from her lips. A wonderful, well nigh impossible thing had come to pass. An event which she could not have stirred hand or foot to bring about, had been brought about for her. A mystery she could not fathom had been accomplished; a miracle had been wrought. All this, and nothing less, it seemed to this simple maiden, because the most ordinary common thing in the world had happened. What more natural than that her brother having failed, she should be summoned by her aunt to supply his deficiency? What more likely than that she should be permitted to do so? What need of this fear, this trepidation, this emotion on so trite a subject?

And why should Mattie care to go at all? The night was dark and wild—the circle at Lady Turner's would in all probability prove formal and unattractive,—formidable, moreover, to one so shy and unused to society. It would have been much more easily understood, much more in accordance with the young Matilda's character, if she had shrunk from and shunned the ordeal. It would,—and yet it had seemed as if her very heart would break if she had had to send a refusal. Underneath that passive exterior, veins were throbbing and swelling: that gentle acquiescence hid a passion of entreaty.

She had so envied the elder ones who had been preferred before her, had so patiently borne her deprivation, and so proudly hidden her desire, that the present reaction was almost too much.

To none had a whisper of her secret been confided; and how childish would one and all have deemed her, knowing nothing,—how much, how infinitely worse than childish—a fool, a simpleton—had the truth come out?

That Frederick was to be there—the handsome, haughty, stiffnecked Fred, the pride and object and worry of his mother's life—the incomprehensible, unmanageable, unsusceptible cousin,—what should that have been to any of the fair Boscawens? They had been deeply annoyed,—at least Adelaide and Julia had, for the youngest sister knew nothing of

such matters,—because a ridiculous rumor had got abroad, and been banded from one to the other, founded on the mere fact of Frederick's having been seen galloping across the floating sands which lay between Rimmin and the Castle, whereas he ought to have gone round to his uncle's door by the road at the head of the bay. Suppose he had chosen the quickest path—suppose he were a dare-devil rider who risked his neck without much thought of its value—was that to say that he would not as readily have done the same had the dangerous route led him to any other goal? He had brought Mattie a fragment of pink seaweed from the islet in the heart of the bay, and Mattie had taken it with a burst of tears.

This had been unfortunate, foolish. She had been spoken to, and told how absurd she was, and kept away from Rimmin strenuously from that time. She had also been tutored to avoid her cousin, to speak coldly to him, withdraw herself from his company when accident brought him to the Castle, and in all respects show that what had so unluckily happened was merely the effect of the shock consequent on finding that any one—*any one*—had been so thoughtless, and had had so narrow an escape.

All this Mattie had done, and no further blame had in consequence attached itself to her.

But now Frederick was going away; and going, as she felt, under an impression so false, that if he left Rimmin at this time, according to his present intentions, all was over that ever might have been between them. Once, she had felt nearly sure she was beloved, but of late coldness had begotten coldness, and reserve, formality,—so that the alienation at length had become complete, and one at least had well-nigh despaired of anything ever happening to break it down. But might not Mattie have this one chance more? Might she not just see him, hear him, be in his presence once again?

The fiat went forth—"No." Adelaide and Julia alone accepted their aunt's hospitality, and not a word or sign gave the little sister when she heard it. Hard as her fate was, she had borne it bravely; but none the less had the disappointment been bitter, and to find herself once more, without act or effort of her own, within a few hours of meeting her cousin within his own halls, filled her with amazement and strange delight. No wonder that

tremors had overrun her frame as she stood in patient silence during her mother's deliberation; Mattie could never speak, but she could keenly feel.

It was not the decision she had had to fear, however, it was the delay. And that we shall presently explain.

Mrs. Boscawen, being precluded by the state of her health from leaving her own apartments, had known nothing of what had passed between Frederick and his cousin. She saw Mattie gentle, quiet, composed as ever, and fancied that her youngest daughter, whose temper and disposition she had hardly so far had an opportunity of studying, was by nature silent and reserved, as she had certainly shown herself to be under the diligent supervision before mentioned. Since the parent had nothing whereof to complain, she asked no questions, and was vouchsafed no information, there being no occasion for her to be enlightened.

At least so thought Adelaide and Julia, and they had their own reasons for reticence. Frederick's gallantry had annoyed them to the full as much as had its effect upon their sister, and they had been even more out of temper with their friend and gossip, Norah Hamilton, than with either; for it was Norah who, referring to the foolhardy feat, had alleged that people "talked," and that it was given out everywhere that Sir Frederick was engaged to one of his cousins. This was the more provoking since there neither was, nor ever had been, any truth in such a statement, and the idea was repudiated with indignation,—but it was not repeated at home.

"Mattie would think it did not signify what people said," averred Julia.

"Mamma would show that there was something wrong before Aunt Caroline," added Adelaide.

"We should be prevented going to Rimmin ourselves," concluded both. And that settled the matter.

For they liked going to Rimmin very much, if not quite so much as Mattie did; and as they came home along the shore from their walk to the village on the afternoon in question, they were in high good-humor at the prospect of spending the evening there. They had thought themselves obliged to go out, stormy as the weather was, alleging that a few little odds and ends of messages, trifles that were wanted by one and another, would not be properly attended to unless they took upon themselves the task. Mattie was no good; they did not think of asking

her to undertake the business; and on no account would they have out a carriage, a carriage being needed so soon again. That is to say they wanted the walk to exhale some of their exuberant spirits, and to heighten the roses in their cheeks for the evening.

When Lady Turner's messenger arrived at the Castle it was not far from the hour when the return of the two might be looked for, and it was the knowledge of this which made all the time spent by Mrs. Boscawen in considering the question, and pointing out the errors of Mattie's epistle, one of trial to her daughter. In every gust of wind she fancied she heard her sisters' footsteps at the door; and once admitted to the deliberation, their influence was everything with their mother. By intuition she knew what scale it would weigh down in the present instance, and that her chance might go to the winds once Adelaide raised her voice, or Julia her eyebrows.

But the note was written, and the man gone. Joy, joy! No one could now recall him; the walkers were coming from an opposite direction; and by the time they knew anything of the matter, the answer would be in her aunt's hands, and she might snap her fingers at all interference. But she must calm the flutter in her breath, and shade the light within her eye: none must suspect what she would hide, even from herself, if she could. At Rimmin all would be easy; she was not afraid of betrayal once in Frederick's presence, — the very thought that he was near was enough to silence and to petrify, — but beforehand, an unguarded speech, a look of happiness, might attract fatal attention.

Mrs. Boscawen, however, was still alone when Mattie returned to the boudoir.

"My tea, Mattie; I am so thirsty, child," she began plaintively. "Your sisters really need not have stayed so long. It is past five now, and getting quite dark. I don't like their being out at this hour."

"It is only dark in this room, mamma; it is quite light outside."

"Adelaide will not have been able to match my wool, I am sure."

"I dare say she will; it is not a difficult blue to get."

"More difficult than you think; there are so many shades nowadays. I wish I had told her to bring another case of needles. If I should lose this needle to-night, I should not know what to do; it is my last; I have not another anywhere.

Dear! how stupid of me not to think of that before, when she was actually going to the needle-shop! Now I shall have a whole evening doing nothing —"

"You must just not lose your needle, mamma," said Mattie gaily. Poor child! She could not but be gay, do what she would. Everything was now in her eyes as bright as in her mother's all was sombre, and her conviction of the daylight's having lasted, and of her sisters' successful shopping, would have extended itself to further cheerfulness on any other subject started; she could not conjure up needles, but she could say, "You must just not lose yours," as though such words had a charm to retain it.

The invalid, however, was not to be beguiled from her mood.

"I do not drop it on purpose, my dear. But you know what a sad helpless creature I am of an evening, when I have had all the worries of the day to go through; and if it should slip through my fingers, how am I to find it again? I cannot hunt it up myself, and Harrison has no eyes. If I send for her it upsets me altogether. It is rather hard that I am to be left to Harrison alone for my entire evening."

This was to be expected; it was only wonderful that the prospective want of a companion during the hour which she spent in the sitting-room after dinner before retiring for the night, had not presented itself as a misery before.

"I had thought to have had you, at least," pursued Mrs. Boscawen, in accents conveying, "You are not much, but still you are better than nothing." "I had been looking forward to hearing the end of the book Julia is reading to me. But I suppose, now that Douglas is gone, you will all three want to go everywhere. I shall have to give in, for I dislike, of all things, making myself a drag upon my children; but I must say, my hours of solitude are the most trying part of all my ill health."

"But, dear mamma, it happens so seldom that you have any. You know we hardly ever go out at all, and you have never once been without one of us before."

"You would not like it yourself, Mattie."

Mattie was silent, assiduously bending over the tea-table, and by-and-by the benign influence of a strong and steaming cup began to appear. "My head is really better," the invalid allowed, "and perhaps it was as well that the others did

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not come in till I could better bear their voices. Be sure you keep the teapot warm, Mattie; they will not like to find things uncomfortable."

"Mamma, there is a little rose in that glass, — it is not doing much good there —"

"Not doing much good?" said Mrs. Boscawen, laughing. "What good should it do? What do you mean, child?"

"It would be just the thing for my hair to-night, if you do not want it very much."

"Is that it? No, I do not want it very much, at least I think I can exist without it, Mattie; bring the glass to me. Here," continued the speaker, raising herself on her elbow, "this pretty bunch of scarlet geranium, and that spray of jessamine will suit you better than the rose. But we want some green; this piece of myrtle — I almost grudge the myrtle; but, however, it will not be wasted — take them now, my love; that is as pretty a bouquet as you could have."

"Thank you, thank you, mamma."

"I declare, you have quite a color to-day, Mattie."

"Have I, mamma?"

"You are generally pale, and this morning I fancied you particularly pale; I wondered if your head, too, ached. Now go and dress, my dear, for you will want help, and there is not so very much time. Harrison can go to you first, so as not to interfere with your sisters."

They did not come in until the room had been silent for nearly a quarter of an hour. They had been round the garden and greenhouse after returning from their walk, having, like Mattie, a fancy for wearing natural flowers in their hair, and they now appeared laden with fresh-scented blossoms.

"Heliotrope, even," cried Julia gaily. "I do think we manage well. Mamma, I would leave these with you, only I have nothing else to wear."

"I did remember some ferns for your glass, mamma," subjoined Adelaide. "Here they are. But where are all the flowers gone?" inquired she, in surprise. "They were only gathered this morning."

"A marauder has carried them off. If I had known you were going to the greenhouse, I might have waited to see what you brought in; but I gave them all to Mattie."

"To Mattie? What did Mattie want to do with them?"

"To wear them to-night, as you and Julia do."

"But Mattie is not going to-night, mamma."

"Indeed she is. A little event happened whilst you were out. Your aunt sent over a special messenger to invite her. She is wanted to fill Douglas's place at the dinner-table."

"And she is to go?" The voice was Adelaide's, but so changed was it from the jovial pleasantry of its tone on her first appearance that it sounded in her mother's ears perfectly appalling. In an instant Mrs. Boscawen took the alarm. She had done the wrong thing, and there was now no escape for her; instead of having the pleasure of recounting the details of the "little event" — instead of being able to dwell upon her difficulties in the matter of the note, on Lady Turner's civility, and the groom's impatience, with the unction of one who had not often the chance of being a narrator, — she was to be brought to the bar, and called on sharply for her defence.

In her confusion and astonishment the poor lady shuffled. "I did not like to refuse," she murmured uneasily. "I — I really did not know what to say."

"Did you accept the invitation for her, mamma?" It was Julia whose accents now expressed, "Answer me that, without further circumlocution."

"I — Well, I allowed her to write for herself."

"And to say she would go?"

"She said she would go. Yes."

A solemn silence ensued, during which the parent's heart quaked in spite of herself. She could not stand it. "If I had had a minute to think," her nervous apology ran, "if I had not been hurried so, I might have managed to hit upon some excuse. But the man was waiting, and Boyd insisted, and Mattie was no help to me one way or another. She never is, poor child. I was left entirely to myself; and yet I was told the answer must be sent immediately! It was all so quickly done, — in such a bustle. Why were you so late in coming home, you two? If you had only been here —"

"We could not tell that we should be wanted," said Adelaide gloomily; "but I am sure I wish with all my heart we had been."

Then she glanced at Julia, and there was a passing aside — "What is to be done?"

"If I had only had time," reiterated the culprit querulously. "People have no right to rush at one in that impetuous way, demanding answers on the spot."

It makes one shake all over; I have been uncomfortable ever since,—at least I was just quieting down when you came in to stir it all up over again. My head has been so bad this afternoon. It is no pleasure to me, I can tell you," she added, with some spirit, "to have only a lonely evening before me. I do not send Mattie away for my own good."

"Mamma, why did you not think of that before?" cried Julia.

"It would have been the very thing to say," added her sister.

Mrs. Boscawen looked troubled. "I don't know, I'm sure," she said; "your aunt would immediately have set me down as selfish."

"Not if Mattie had written it herself. If she had said that she could not think of leaving you—at least, that *we* could not think of your being left entirely by yourself—Aunt Caroline would have understood at once."

"But Mattie would have been disappointed."

"Did she say so?"

"You know she never does say anything. No; I don't remember that she expressed any wish on the subject, but I think she was *willing*—I am sure she was quite *ready*, to go. It is so seldom that she cares about being taken anywhere, that I was really glad she should have the treat."

"That is it, mamma; it *is* a treat. Mamma, I do think you ought to know. Mattie likes to go to Rimmin, because Frederick—because she and Frederick—"

"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Boscawen, bolt upright on her sofa, headache and grievances forgotten.

"Oh, nothing much, mamma; nothing at all much. But she is foolish about him; at least she behaved rather absurdly once, and I am not quite sure that if anything of the sort happened a second time, she might not do the same again."

"Anything of what sort?"

Then followed Julia's version of the ride across the quicksands, and the favor which Mattie had been told to wear in her breast, and which had made her cry. "But of course," added the sister, "she was very much ashamed, and has been on her guard ever since. As Fred is going away, we thought there was no need to say anything,—it will all be forgotten before they meet again; but, for Mattie's own sake, I am sorry she is to see him again just now."

"Has she ever seen him since?"

"Only once or twice; and then she kept away from where he was, and they hardly spoke to each other at all. It will be different to-night; he will be able to find her out if he wishes, and she cannot well keep out of his way."

"I don't feel sure that she desires to keep out of his way," observed Adelaide bluntly. "If I were certain of that, I should not mind her going so much."

"You see, mamma," pursued the milder Julia, "it is a pity to make too much of it. Fred meant nothing, but Mattie was startled, and thought him a sort of hero; and you know she is sensitive, and easily upset. Really," she subjoined charitably, "I don't think she was so much to blame as appeared."

"But I would stop her going to-night," said Adelaide, with resolution.

"You would? Now?" Mrs. Boscawen looked from one to the other, to make sure that both were in earnest,—that in the midst of all these new thoughts and ideas she still retained sense enough to understand aright.

Certainly there was no mistaking the expression on either daughter's face. They were fine-looking girls, with abundance of flaxen hair, high noses, and determined, well-shapen mouths. Mattie, who was chestnut, and had a small and tender lip, was not more unlike the elder pair in her shrinking, varying temperament, than in the contrast her mobile features presented to their large, calm faces. By emotion it was certain neither of the two now under scrutiny would at any time be carried away, but at the present moment they were roused as much as their mother ever remembered to have seen them. It was not becoming; they did not look the better for it, as Mattie did; but it answered its purpose. The parent was mastered in time. The cardinals subdued their pope; forced from her a decree; and compelled her to name a legate.

Meantime, within her large, dimly lighted chamber, Mattie's toilet was proceeding jocosely. Stepping from mirror to wardrobe, from table to cupboard, she hummed a tune in the pauses betwixt directing the maid and submitting to her nimble fingers. All went well; the glossy locks were knotted up, the fragrant blossoms wreathed in and out between them, the white robe was on, and the pearls were clasped round the soft young throat. Completely arrayed she stood, and no fairer form had ever been reflected in the ancient pier-glass than that which, like a



pensive lily, with hanging head, almost too shyly satisfied to look, paused for a last survey in front.

"Oh, to-night, to-night!" whispered a voice within the young girl's bosom. "What may to-night bring? What will to-night do? Who would ever have dreamed that there was to be such a to-night to such a morning?"

A tap at the door.

Mattie started. Was it the wind? Was it the rattling of the old cornices which age had loosened, or was it a quick, imperative voice without, demanding admittance? The latter.

Blushing, she turned from the mirror, ashamed to be detected in such a contemplation, and went quickly forward as the door opened. "It was not bolted, Adelaide; you need not have waited. The handle is stiff, that is all."

"Mattie—oh, it is a pity that you are dressed."

Mattie's eyes were raised in gentle wonder. A pity? She had let them fall on the ground, modestly awaiting the approving glance which perhaps even her eldest sister might vouchsafe to such a toilet, and she could not understand that her cares and pains should produce only "a pity."

"Mamma will tell you. I think she wishes to see you at once. I am in a hurry," said Adelaide, with a haste that was curious, all things considered, "I cannot stop to talk. Is Harrison gone to our room?"

"Adelaide,—what is it?" But Adelaide was gone.

The gloves and handkerchief just gathered into her sister's hand fell beneath the table; something of evil Mattie boded, and even that something was enough; it was an effort to collect herself and go down-stairs.

"You are dressed? That is a pity. I was afraid you would be," said Mrs. Boscawen, using almost the same words as her daughter had done, but in a tone of more regret. "I am really sorry you should have had the trouble, my dear; for, on second thoughts, I think it right to cancel my permission for you to go this evening."

It had been agreed on during the council that no reason was to be given—that nothing about Frederick, at least, was to be said.

"I had not fully considered the question," continued the speaker kindly, and yet with a definite purpose and strength in her present resolution that had not

been apparent in the former,—"I was taken by surprise, seized upon all at once, taken advantage of—"

"Oh, mamma!"

"Well, well, my dear, I did not mean by *you*. It was Boyd's fault, and your aunt's, and—altogether I seemed to have no voice in the matter; I had no choice. Your sisters, when they came in, were quite astonished to find that I had been prevailed on to consent—they thought it quite unwise; and though I wish that you had not had all the trouble of making ready—looking so nice, too" she could not resist adding—"still I am afraid, my love, I must send you to take off your things again."

She paused for a reply, but in front of her stood a marble statue, dumb and motionless.

"Do you not understand?" pursued Mrs. Boscawen, with a touch of irritation.

"Aunt Caroline," murmured Mattie, for on this rock she had built for security; "what would—she—say?"

"Adelaide will explain it to her. Both your sisters think that I ought not to be left alone on such a doleful evening; they will show that it was natural I should not think of my own comfort," said the invalid, with the complacency of one who considered herself irreproachable in that respect; "and you are so young, no one would expect you to be as thoughtful for me as the two who have been more at home, and know what a poor, broken-down creature I am,—broken down in every way. Even this wind tries my nerves almost more than I can bear," putting her hand to her forehead.

Twice her auditor essayed to speak, and twice the trembling lips refused their office; but at length a low sound caught the parent's ear.

"Well?" she said.

"Mamma—"

"Well, my dear, well? What is it? I hear you."

"Let me go this once."

Mrs. Boscawen started. This was, in plain terms, more than she had bargained for; it had been hitherto so easy to govern and direct this child, that the idea of the child ever suggesting, far less insisting on, a thing for itself, had never for a moment entered any one's head.

"What did you say?" she inquired incredulously.

"Let me go this once, if you please, mamma."

"That I shall not," said her mother, with asperity.

"Dear mamma —" The eyes were swimming, and one large drop slipped from the lash on which it hung, and stole down the cheek. No more could be spoken at such a moment.

"Fie, Mattie! To cry for this! To make so much of such a paltry sacrifice! I am really hurt; it is the last thing I should have expected. Many a sick parent has to urge her children to leave her side for the sake of their own health, but mine require to be bidden to stay with me."

"Just this once. Dear mamma, don't speak like that; you know I like to sit with you, and read to you, and play to you, and you know I never did think it any sacrifice, — but to-night, I want — oh, I want to go."

"Why should you want to go? What is there about an ordinary dinner-party to make it an object of desire to any one? I am not going; and though, of course, I should like as well as others to do as they do, and take part in what they enjoy, you do not see me making a fuss and complaining that I cannot."

"If you would allow me —"

"I will not allow you. After this, after your showing so much persistency and self-will in the matter, I should consider myself quite to blame if I gave way. Now you need not stand there any longer. I am not going to have any contention on the matter; it is for me to decide on such a point, and your duty is to obey without hesitation. Go at once and take off your things."

"Mamma —"

"Really, Mattie, I could not have believed it of you. I desire you to go, and you stand as still as a stone! I never would have thought that you, of all people, would be the one to whom I should have to speak twice. I shall say no more, but I am much disappointed by the way in which you have behaved to-night."

Then Mattie left.

Mrs. Boscawen had seldom in her life been so peremptory with any one. She was, as has before been hinted, a feeble-minded, characterless person, who was seldom interested in much beyond her own petty comforts or complaints, — timid by nature, yet jealous of maintaining such power over the family and household as she could by any means keep within her grasp. She was neither unkind nor inordinately selfish; provided it cost no effort, she could agree to a request cheerfully, and listen to an account with patience; but the moment an adverse wind blew,

she yielded to its blast — she was at the mercy of any dominant power.

It had been distasteful to her beyond measure to find that there had been passages — scenes between the cousins, whereof she had known nothing. A deprivation of this sort was precisely what she could smart under; and, moreover, the consciousness of not having herself behaved with strict integrity, of having been evasive and timorous during the interview with the elder sisters, had found vent in an extra display of peevish authority when she had been called on anew to face the younger. They should not, one and all, set her at naught as they had done; she would have one at least under her maternal sway; and though Adelaide and Julia had as usual made this sway their cat's-paw, Mattie could not know, she flattered herself, that they had done so. (Mattie, we may be allowed to suspect, knew very well; but that is not to our purpose.)

And then Mrs. Boscawen was really vexed by what she had heard.

Sir Frederick might, of course, had he so chosen, have sought an alliance with his Scottish cousins; it would have been perhaps satisfactory if he had done so. But since nothing of the kind had ever been attempted, and since, up to the present time, they had all got on so amicably together, it was really too tiresome of Mattie, a chit of a schoolgirl, to come home and introduce an element of discord between the sober households. What should she know of Fred in three months? Adelaide and Julia had been intimate with him for years, had stayed at his hunting-box, where Lady Turner presided during the spring months, and met him every other night in town for several seasons, — yet to them he was only an escort, a good-humored, influential cousin, good for tickets to shows and *fêtes* — a man whom they liked to be seen with, but whom they had not the smallest ambition to be with unless they *were* seen. They tried to believe that he admired them and was proud of them; but there was sufficient uncertainty on the point to provoke effort, to make them more than ordinarily particular as to their appearance and manners when he was present.

At least, however, he should not amuse himself with Mattie. He had never attempted anything of the sort with either of the grown-up Miss Boscawens, and they had no idea of his paying their sister the dubious compliment of gallantry that meant nothing. If there lurked a secret

twinge of jealousy at her having attracted an attention, even a passing attention, which their charms had failed to inspire, at least the fair prudes did not themselves suspect as much. They felt that they had done the right thing as to the point now at issue, and attired themselves for the evening, with the peaceful consciousness that the desired end had been attained.

"But we need not say anything to your father," observed Mrs. Boscawen, to the first who came down after the interview above narrated.

It chanced to be Julia — Julia in ruffles and flounces, ribbons and jewels, more ample, fuller blown than ever; and as she spoke, the mother surveyed the finery doubtfully. Mattie had looked different.

To be sure, what suited Mattie would hardly have been the thing for Julia; and the simple folds of a white frock, which did excellently well for slim eighteen, were not perhaps calculated to set off the maturer form of robust five-and-twenty. There was so much of this particular five-and-twenty, moreover, — such a neck and bust, and arms and shoulders, that the fully trimmed, festooned, and rustling train could not be said to be superabundant; but, nevertheless, the effect was not so pleasing as it ought to have been. Had necessity compelled the mother to desire that it and all its accessories should be doffed, it is certain that she would not have ejaculated that "looking so nice, too," which escaped ere she was aware, when passing the decree upon her youngest.

No fears nor doubts, however, disturbed the resplendent Julia herself. Satisfaction shone in her eye, showed itself in the tones of her voice, and even influenced the tenor of her reply. She agreed with her mother, and spoke of her sister as "poor Mattie."

"I went to her room just now," she said, "and she was so quiet that I should not have thought she had minded, only I saw that she had thrown down all her things, her nice white muslin and all, in a heap on the floor; and her hair was loose over her shoulders —"

"That was temper; there was no need to have touched her hair. She might, at least, have let me have the pleasure of seeing it nicely arranged, she need not have thought it wasted."

"You did not give any reason for stopping her, mamma?"

"None whatever. I said exactly what you and Adelaide told me, — nothing that

she could have minded — nothing, at least, that she *ought* to have minded. I could not believe my ears, when she actually tried to make me alter my decision afterwards."

"Did she do that?"

"She did indeed."

"What did she say, mamma?"

"She begged to go; that was all. Quite enough too, for one who never asks to be taken anywhere. It showed me immediately that I was right — that you and Adelaide were right, in advising me to put a stop to it."

"I am really sorry for her. Mamma, don't say any more about it; it will do no good."

"And I am sure I have had enough of the subject. I wish now you would all get away as quickly as possible, and let us settle down to our quiet evening. I dare say we shall be quite happy together. Your father has brought in the parcel from the library; it was kind of him to call for it, and it will be quite an interest to Mattie to see what we have got. I am looking forward to her reading aloud — it will keep the dismal howling of the wind out of my ears."

Already she was impatient to begin. "I do wish you were all out of the way now," she proceeded. "Could you not go down to the drawing-room and wait there? The going in and out, and the talking of many people in this little room, always fuses me."

"Very well, mamma; I will go down with the very next person that appears; but I may stay till some one does, may I not? This room is so nice and warm," with a little shiver.

"Have you wraps enough?"

"Quite, mamma, thank you."

"You will not get blown about at either house, that is one good thing. The entrance to Rimmin is as well sheltered as our own."

"Better; at least it was better until papa built up that archway. Oh, we shall be quite out of the wind going in and out of the carriage, but I wish we had not to drive along the shore-road: the tide is so high to-night that the waves are breaking right over the rocks."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Boscawen languidly. She was not going to drive along the shore-road herself, and the waves seemed a good way off from her cosy pillows. "Oh, here are papa and Adelaide at last. Now then, good-bye; go down to the drawing-room everybody. What! Is the carriage there? That's right, then.

Do shut the door, Boyd, the cold air coming in from the passage chills one all over. Put your shawls on, girls, quickly."

"But where is Mattie?" inquired her husband.

"She will be here directly. As soon as you are gone, we shall have our little dinner together——"

"Is she not going with us?"

"Not to-night; she will go another night."

"I wish her to go to-night," said Mr. Boscawen decidedly. "Julia, call your sister, and say we are waiting."

"Papa——" Julia paused, looking round for support; and at the look, a voice was raised from the sofa.

"It is impossible, my dear," said the mother. "If I had known that you wished it before—but now it is too late. She is not thinking of going. She is not dressed, nor—nor anything."

"Then she must dress, and tell her to be quick."

"The carriage is at the door."

"It can wait a few minutes. Do as I desire you, Julia."

To such a tone even Julia must submit, and without a word she left the room.

But who shall describe the shock of mingled feelings which that message gave? Oh, how bitterly did Mattie now repent her ill-advised haste, her passionate weeping! Get ready to go now? Now, when every single part of her attire would have to be put on afresh,—when her hair, all dishevelled as it was, would in itself require care, pains, attention,—and when the flowers lay broken on the floor?

Now? Was she dreaming? Her trembling feet refused their office, as she rose in bewildered consternation, and down upon the chair she sank again. Could she ever, with such a beating heart and such nerveless fingers, begin from the beginning once more, and rehabilitate herself within the time permitted? Harrison seemed an age in coming.

"And oh, Miss Mattie," cried the maid, "'twill take a good half-hour, your hair alone; and there's your dress to lace, and the bows to tie, and even then—bless me, bless me!" which later aspiration, murmured under the speaker's breath, was called forth by a vision of the pale, tear-stained face beside her, as contrasted with its glowing freshness when last seen so short a time before.

"I can be ready, Julia, indeed I can.

Oh, Harrison, what need to brush my hair all over? Put it up as it was, or—any way you can. Oh, my flowers, my pretty flowers! Oh, Julia, why did mamma change so often? why did she insist on my undressing, as she did? Tell papa I will be ready immediately. Dear, kind papa. Please find my gloves, Harrison, I had them one minute ago."

Another messenger, in haste and breathless, a voice at the door saying, "If Miss Mattie's ready, she is to come; if not, Miss Julia is to come immediately. Coachman says the tide is still rising, and the horses will be frightened if the waves come too near. Master says he can't wait another minute."

"It's of no use, Miss Mattie," said Harrison, with the calmness of despair; "we couldn't be ready, not if we tried never so, for a quarter of an hour——"

"I must go, you see," added Julia hurriedly. "Don't go on trying, Mattie, it is of no use. I wish papa had let it alone."

"Get on, Harrison, get on," whispered the youthful mistress to her maid, as the two were left behind. "Never mind what they say; I shall be in time yet. Are you nearly done? Oh, this dreadful gown! How far have you got? You must be half-way? I can be collecting my things——"

"If you jump about like that, miss, I can't find the holes."

"Well; but tell me the moment you reach the top——What is that?"

It was the carriage rolling away from the front door.

Mrs. Boscawen rather enjoyed her dinner after that. She considerably explained that, if she had only known her husband's wishes in time, she would not have cancelled her permission, and would not have sent her daughter to unrobe; she also demonstrated that if Mattie had not been over-impetuous in fulfilling her commands, her toilet might have been effected for the second time without difficulty. Finally, she considered that everybody had been to blame, and that she, who had tried to please all, had been unrewarded for her efforts. It was certainly hard that her husband, who so seldom took any part in family matters, should have been vexed and put out by what had happened. She could not understand his caring about such a trifle at all, and still less his, "Well, I suppose I can make it all straight, but I wish it had not happened."

With unusual discretion, she did not confide the above remark to her companion, aware that it might be ruminated upon more than would be advisable, but confined herself to general subjects, after a passing word of commendation to Mattie's thoughtfulness in coming at once when summoned to the meal, instead of waiting for further alterations in her appearance. It could do her pretty dress no more harm to wear it on this quiet occasion, than to take it out and have it crushed among a crowd of people. She liked to see her children nice, and so seldom had that pleasure, that really it did her good,—and so on, and so on. But, alas! after dinner the headache returned, so that even books and music could not be thought of with any satisfaction. No, she must go to bed; she was very sorry; it was vexatious, now that they might have had a nice, cheery evening together, but it was of no use bearing up any longer. "And don't sit up late yourself, little one," exhorted the parent, as she left the room. "You will not have above an hour or two alone, for it is nearly eight now,—you might have come into my room, but I must try to get a sleep. Don't go on with the story to yourself, Mattie; that would be too bad of you, when we are both so much interested. I think I shall take it with me," laughing, "to put it out of the way, for fear you should be tempted. Good-night. Dear, that wind! But I don't think it is quite so bad as it was."

Not a sound now broke the silence in the house, save the dull moaning of the blast without, and the occasional patter of a shower on the window-panes. The servants were too far off in their own regions for voice or laugh to penetrate the passages above; and in the weird stillness which prevailed, the striking of the hour by the great clock outside made the solitary watcher start.

She started still more when immediately following the last note of eight there rang through the house the sharp, imperative peal of the great door-bell. At such an hour, on such a night, who could be thus seeking admittance? Tenants did occasionally come of an evening, when business obliged them to speak to her father, and a message from the farm was a thing of frequent occurrence, but such visitors or despatches were usually conveyed through the back door; and even the parcels sent up by the village tradespeople found their way into the house without passing through the entrance-hall.

What could it be? The others returned? No, the road was never impassable, even in a spring-tide; and if anything had happened to the horses, news must have been heard of it long before. They had had time to reach Rimmin and come back again, Mattie calculated. But what should the carriage return for? There was a carriage, she made out, as in some curiosity she hung over the staircase, listening and peering through the open door into the portico. How very odd! It must be their carriage, of course, and what was it doing there? Come for *her*?

Boyd was leisurely ascending the staircase ere the thought had had time to do more than dart into the listener's mind—ere she had had a minute wherein to canvass its merits, and school herself for its rejection if necessary. And once more in that eventful evening she had to learn that the wheel of fortune had turned.

"Sir Frederick's carriage come to fetch you, Miss Mattie, by master's orders," said the old man, with cheerful sympathy in his eye and tone. "Her ladyship hopes to find you in the drawing-room when they come out from dinner."

And accordingly, a pale, silent girl was sitting in a distant recess of the great drawing-room at Rimmin, listening, or feigning to listen, to a companion of her own age, pretty Isabel Wray, who was bearing her company, when Frederick cast his eyes around to see whether the day was like to be his own or not. He came in last of all the stragglers from the dining-room. He stood still in the doorway, as though he had no particular desire to enter further, pulling his long moustache, and speaking to no one; but something in the gesture, in the pause and halt, meant to Mattie that her cousin had seen her. Next she became aware, and that without once raising her head or turning from her companion, that he was coming.

"How do you do?" said Fred. "What a long way off from everybody you two have flown! Did you come here to escape from us all?"

"Miss Wray," continued he pleasantly, after a while, "how good it was of you not to have been singing before we came in! I was afraid we had been missing a great deal. May we hope you will now—ah—delight us all with a ballad?"

It was too late, another lady had been prevailed upon.

"Have you seen these new prints?"



The polite host adroitly covered his defeat. "We have only just got the book. My mother is tremendously taken with them."

In fact, Lady Turner had already inflicted the volume on all present, and it had at length been made over to the girls. They had dutifully gone through the whole set, and everything that could be said had already been exhausted between them; but under Sir Frederick's guidance, to be sure, they were nothing loath to commence the task afresh.

He was bent on finding entertainment for both, directing his attentions to Isabel, but keeping by the other's side. Yet he scarcely spoke to Mattie, leaning across her even, to point out beauties to her companion; and she began at last to wonder whether she was really happy or wretched, and to commune with herself as to whether she had not better take the first opportunity of rising and leaving a seat which, although by her cousin's side, yet brought her no closer to him.

At length the sounds of music ceased.

"Miss Hamilton is tired," said Fred, shutting the book briskly; "and she is not in voice to-night. We must not allow her to be tasked again. Now it is your turn." And he rose, resolutely addressing Isabel.

Naturally she stood up also.

A table which had been drawn in front of the trio for the heavy book to lie upon was pushed aside by the gentleman, — pushed right in front of his cousin, that Miss Wray might pass by the more conveniently, and in the movement a clumsy accident occurred — a valuable vase of Lady Turner's was thrown down and broken.

"Oh dear!" cried both the horror-stricken damsels, in consternation.

"Pray go on," implored the more hardened offender. "Don't stop, or it will be noticed. I will pick up the pieces. In the name of charity, Miss Wray, rush to the piano, and save me from my mother."

Miss Wray obeyed, and the coast was clear at last.

"Mattie," said Frederick, very softly, "help me, will you?"

She stooped in search of the fragments, and he, like a blockhead, took the same moment for stooping also, at the risk of the two heads crashing together. Was it that which made her start, and the china fall from her hand again? No, it was not a blow, but a whisper from her cousin. "I must see you for a moment alone. I must speak to you to-night."

The song began.

"Go into my mother's little room," said Fred, with his back to the company, and his head still bent over the broken jar. "Go out at this door, and no one can see, — you won't refuse me? Wait till you hear. I will be with you immediately."

How she got out, or whether she were really unobserved or not as she stole away, Mattie never knew. Fred declared afterwards that she did it admirably, but then he allowed at the same time that he had neither looked nor cared; he knew she *went*, and that was enough for him.

He found his own way out by the principal entrance at the other end of the room, taking, as it were, a casual stroll towards it, with a word here and a word there to one and another of the company whom chance threw in his way, and then seizing his opportunity to escape when all were engaged. Within a very few minutes he was keeping his tryst.

But the light was so partial in the little room, only a single bar of moonshine having shot through the mullioned window, that to the first survey no figure was discernible anywhere within.

He stopped short. "Mattie!"

"I am here."

She was nearly hidden from his view by the curtain, even when her voice directed him where to look; her dress might have been one of its folds, in the deep shadow where she stood.

"I am here." But she did not turn round, nor move towards him.

The waves were booming over the rocks below, but there was no longer the angry roar of a flowing tide to aid their clamor; the wind had subsided with its ebb, and a sullen swell had succeeded to the tumult of the waters.

Even so was Mattie's breast heaving with departed passions, conflicts, griefs, and bitterness. All these were over now; she scarcely trembled — she was calm, solemn, wrapped in a sort of trance; a sense of wondering awe held her still, and quieted the beating of her heart. What had happened, or what was going to happen, she could but dimly realize. Yet was she neither confused nor bewildered, only conscious of a deep, strange peace, and then of a voice in her ear, a presence by her side, some one holding her in his arms. "Why, Mattie! My darling!"

Mattie did not swoon away, she only turned very white and sank gently for-

wards, before she was caught and upheld; and since even fainting people can do without water when it is not to be had, it is to be presumed that Frederick considered this to be a case in which that restorative might be dispensed with.

He did not go in search of it, he tried other means; and so successful were these, that tears were flowing and cheeks were blushing rosy red again, long ere he had done: and so much had to be said, and vowed, and sworn, and the speaker was so fervent and impetuous in his mode of saying it, and so resolute in claiming his right to add appropriate accompanying actions, that his fair companion was in no danger of mistaking reality for dreamland again.

"But, indeed, you gave me a fright when first I saw you to-night," said Fred, at last. "I could not understand that pale, sorrowful face. I thought we had dragged you here against your will. Why, — did your father not tell you all about it?"

"My father?" said Mattie, raising her eyes.

"Who else? Did he — did you not know? I waylaid him this afternoon, got his consent and his promise to bring you. Then I went home and made my mother write."

"And when I did not come?"

"Ay, indeed, when you did not come, I thought it was all up with me; but my uncle had the charity to take me aside before dinner and explain how it was. So I sent for you. Why, the tide was nothing; that coachman of yours is an old wife for thinking of such rubbish. But, do you know, my little cousin, I had not the pluck to ask whether you had obeyed the summons or not! Upon my word, Mattie, I was such a craven, that I sat still in the dining-room, though I heard the carriage pass the window, and could not muster enough spirit either to make an excuse for going outside to meet you, or even to inquire if you were there. Until I beheld you with my own eyes, I had no idea what I was to expect. And now —"

And now the victory was his, as he deserved it should be. Like a right bold gallant, he had gone straight on his course — whatever of weakness he might choose to confess in a tender moment — and the event had justified his temerity. His cousin, he had argued within himself, had certainly been cold, constrained, and distant to him — but that was all he could allege against his hopes of her. And

what of that? Was it for him to be backward because the woman of his choice did not fling herself into his arms? Cold, indeed! Were she to all appearance as cold as ice, was that to say there was no warmth within, — no smouldering volcano beneath the snowy surface? How could he tell if he never tried? He would have it out, yea or nay, and know her mind from her own lips. If she loved him, well; if not, if she would have none of him, the worst was out, and there would be no more beating about the bush, disappointments, vexations, and heart-burnings ever recurring. He would bear his rejection if need be, like a man, but he would at least meet it face to face. In short, our lover made a second dash through the quicksands, and a second time reached the shore in safety. Would that more were like him!

But Mattie's ups and downs were scarcely over for that eventful evening even now. She had to go back to the great saloon presently, to run the gauntlet of inquisitive glances, of affectionate anxiety, and of sisterly frowns. Even with Fred by her side, these could not but be felt, even with his shadow between her and the lights, her lip must quiver and her eyelids droop. While the rest of the company remained, the hour must have its drawbacks.

But at length came happiness, complete and unalloyed. She was cleared in the eyes of all; her father smiled, her sisters stared, she was taken to her aunt's heart, and she was Fred's forevermore.

Now, was there ever likely to be another evening in Mattie's life like unto this?

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From Macmillan's Magazine.

#### THE WIT AND HUMOR OF LORD BEACONSFIELD.

DEATH is the gate of criticism: the grave is, by a strange law of natural compensation, essentially memorial. Once let it close over an eminent person, and the justice of perspective is restored: we remember much that we have forgotten; we forget much that we have remembered. More especially is this the case on the decease of an author whose life implies eloquence before a prejudiced or preoccupied audience. His words seem to return in a sequence, connecting and characterizing his work, and the man revives in the manner. Above all, how-

ever, do these remarks concern Lord Beaconsfield. His individuality was so emphatic that impartial criticism has been hitherto impossible. On the one hand, there have been those who could not believe that a brilliant statesman might also be a great author, just as many argue from a woman's beauty against her ability; on the other, those who believed that rare literary promise had been blighted by rarer political success.

To estimate Lord Beaconsfield's position in the empire of letters is a task far beyond our present space. We might have chosen the marvellous consistency of his sentiments, or the remarkable method of their development in his romances, or the invention by him (for such it is) of the political novel as our theme. But all these are not his most peculiar features, nor will they perpetuate him most. His wit and his humor are his style, and he himself has declared that it is on style that fiction most depends.

We ought first, however, to distinguish aright between wit and humor, for these terms indicate qualities and results by no means identical, and seldom co-existent. We remember to have heard an acute thinker sum up the difference between them by terming wit a point, and humor a straight line; but this epigram is inadequate. Wit is no *resumé* of humor; the two qualities differ in kind. Wit is a department of style; it is the faculty of combining dissimilars, abstract and concrete alike, by the language of illustration, suggestion, and surprise. Like misery, it "yokes strange bed-fellows," but with the link of words alone. It is best when intellectually true, but its requisite is *fancy*.

Humor, on the other hand, is an exercise, by whatever means, of perception; it is the faculty of discerning the incongruities of the concrete alone, particularly of human nature; it "looks on this picture and on that;" it is most excellent when ethically sound, but its essence is *analysis*.

Wit works by comparison, humor by contrast. The sphere of wit is narrower than that of humor; the subject-matter of humor more limited than that of wit. We laugh at humor, at wit we smile. Talent is capable of the former; the perfection of the latter is reserved for genius. Wit is, as it were, Yorick, with cap and bells; but humor unmasks him with a moral. To define wit and humor one ought to be both humorous and witty, but we may epitomize by saying that wit is

mirth turned philosopher—humor, philosophy at play.

If this account be correct, it is clear that humor is at once the more real and the more dramatic agency of the two. Yet wit has been infinitely the least frequent, particularly among the Western races. They, like their Gothic architecture, delight in rough, grotesque, exuberant animalities; but, if we except the Celtic race, it is to the East that we must turn for proverb and simile. The "Haggadah" contains more absolute wit than even Aristophanes, the prince of humorists, sprung too as he was from an Asian civilization. The wisdom of the Koran is wittily formulated. Holy Writ itself contains many examples of wit, though none of humor; while the Moorish and Jewish schools of mediæval Spain furnish wit as subtle and supple as the flashing and fantastic arabesques of their Alhambra. If, we repeat, the Celts, who are both humorous and witty, be excepted, wit is of the Eastern, humor of the Western temperament, while the conjunction of both, the existence of what might be called *Westorientalism*, is extremely uncommon.

Almost the sole examples of wit pure and simple in post-Shakespearian times have been Voltaire, Molière, Rochefoucauld, Sheridan, and Heine: four were Celts, and the last a Hebrew, and in their company is to be enrolled Lord Beaconsfield. But Molière, Sheridan, and Heine were also humorists, and humorists again typically different. The humor of Molière and of Sheridan is, like that of Dickens or of Hogarth, direct and mainly didactic, pointing to the follies and foibles of mankind, the first chiefly by situation, the latter chiefly by speech; the humor of Heine, like that of Sterne, and often of Thackeray, indirect and inclined to the sentimental, insinuating with all the machinery of playful surprise the inconsistencies that enlist feeling or awaken thought. The former is the broadsword of Cœur de Lion, the latter the scimitar of Saladin. It is of this latter species that Lord Beaconsfield's finest humor must be reckoned.

Let us begin with an instance from "Tancred." He is describing the Hebrew Feast of Tabernacles:—

Picture to yourself the child of Israel in the dingy suburb or the stolid quarter of some bleak northern town, where there is never a sun that can at any rate ripen grapes; yet he must celebrate the vintage of purple Palestine. . . . He rises in the morning; goes early to

some Whitechapel market, purchases some willow-boughs for which he has previously given a commission, and which are brought probably from one of the neighboring rivers of Essex, hastens home, cleans out the yard of his miserable tenements, builds his bower, decks it even profusely with the finest flowers and fruit he can procure, and hangs its roof with variegated lamps. After the service of his Synagogue he sups late with his wife and children in the open air as if he were in the pleasant villages of Galilee beneath its sweet and starry sky. . . . Perhaps, as he is offering up the peculiar thanksgiving of the feast of Tabernacles, praising Jehovah for the vintage which his children may no longer cull, but also for his promise that they may some day again enjoy it, and his wife and his children are joining in a pious "Hosanna," that is "Save us," a party of Anglo-Saxons, very respectable men, ten-pounders, a little elevated it may be, though certainly not in honor of the vintage, pass the house, and words like these are heard—"I say, Buggins, what's that row?" "Oh! it's those cursed Jews! we've a lot of them. It is one of their horrible feasts. The lord mayor ought to interfere. However, things are not so bad as they used to be. They used always to crucify little boys at their hullabaloes, but now they only eat sausages made of stinking pork." "To be sure," replies his companion, "we all make progress."

We are at once reminded by this blended pathos and humor of the sudden transition at the close of Heine's "Moses Lump." Yet another example from the same Palestinian portion of the same book:

Mr. Bernard is always with the English bishop, who is delighted to have an addition to his congregation, which is not too much, consisting of his own family, the English and Prussian consuls, and five Jews whom they have converted at twenty piastres a week, but I know they are going to strike for wages. . . .

And once more Barizy of the Tower, a Jew, one of the lifelike group of Jerusalem gossips, is made to say to Consul Pasqualizo:—

"I don't think I can deal in crucifixes." "I tell you what, if you won't your cousin Barizy of the Gate will. I know he has given a great order to Bethlehem." "The traitor," exclaimed Barizy of the Tower. "Well, if people will purchase crucifixes, and nothing else, they must be supplied. Commerce civilizes man."

And indeed we shall find this same special vein of humor in his first novel alike and his last. Take this from "Vivian Grey." The speaker is M. Sievers, the German statesman:—

We have plenty of metaphysicians if you mean them. Watch that lively-looking gentleman who is stuffing Kalte Schale so vor-

ciously in the corner. The heaven of the idealists, a pupil of the celebrated Fichte . . . the first principle of this school is to reject all expressions which incline in the slightest degree to substantiality. Existence is in his opinion a word too absolute. Being, principle, and essence, are terms scarcely sufficiently ethereal even to indicate the subtle shadowings of his opinions. Matter is his great enemy. My dear sir, observe how exquisitely Nature revenges herself on these capricious and fantastic children. . . . *Methtinks that the best answer to the idealism of M. Fichte is to see his pupil devouring Kalte Schale.*

And this from "Endymion:"—

The chairman opened the proceedings, but was coldly received, though he spoke sensibly and at some length. He then introduced a gentleman who was absolutely an Alderman to move a resolution condemnatory of the Corn Laws. The august position of the speaker atoned for his halting rhetoric—and a city which had only just for the first time been invested with municipal privileges was hushed before a man who might in time even become a mayor.

Of a like character is the remark of Lothair after the opera servant's "Thank you, my lord," had attested the "empowering honorarium:—"

He knows me, thought Lothair; but it was not so. When the British nation is at once grateful and enthusiastic they always call you, my lord.

Or, again, Lord Monmouth's indignant advice to Coningsby:—

You go with your family, sir, like a gentleman. You are not to consider your opinions like a philosopher or a political adventurer.

Or Waldershare's account of England's ascendancy:—

I must say it was a grand idea of our kings making themselves sovereigns of the sea. *The greater portion of this planet is water, so we at once become a first-rate power.*

Or the Homeric simplicity of the An-sary tribe, who believe London to be surrounded by sea, and ask if the English live in ships, and are thus corrected by the would-be interpreter, Keferinis:—

The English live in ships only during six months of the year, principally when they go to India, the rest entirely at their country houses.

Similar too is the oblique sarcasm of Fakredcen:—

We ought never to be surprised at anything that is done by the English, who are after all in a certain sense savages. . . . Everything they require is imported from other countries.

... I have been assured at Beirut that they do not grow even their own cotton—but that I can hardly believe. Even their religion is an exotic, and as they are indebted for that to Syria, it is not surprising they should import their education from Greece.

And this light thrust at London architecture:—

Shall we find a refuge in a committee of taste, escape from the mediocrity of one to the mediocrity of many? ... But one suggestion might be made. No profession in England has done its best until it has furnished its victim. The pure administration of justice dates from the deposition of Macclesfield. ... Even our boasted navy never achieved a victory until we shot an admiral. *Suppose an architect were hanged!*\*

Or finally, not to embarrass with riches, in the philosophy of hot plates, where the reason of cold dinners in Paris is ascribed to the inferiority of French pottery and the author concludes quite in the manner of Sterne:—

Now if we only had that treaty of commerce with France which has been so often on the point of completion, the fabrics of our unrivalled potteries in exchange for their capital wines would be found throughout France. The dinners of both nations would be improved; the English would gain a delightful beverage, and the French for the first time in their lives would dine off hot plates, *an unanswerable instance of the advantages of commercial reciprocity.*

But it is not this note alone, though to our minds this note is best, that Lord Beaconsfield strikes in the scale of humor. He has rung almost all the changes it contains, from the broadest comedy to the finest irony. He has revelled in burlesque, and has yet developed characters whose humor is at once lifelike and astonishing.

Thackeray himself, in his Mirobolant love-making by the dishes he has cooked, had not surpassed the mock gravity of the *chef's* conference with which "Tancred" opens. The scene is laid in

that part of the celebrated parish of St. George, which is bounded on one side by Piccadilly, and on the other by Curzon Street. ... It is in this district that the cooks have ever sought an elegant abode. *An air of stillness and serenity, of exhausted passion and suppressed emotion, rather than of sluggishness or dulness, distinguishes this quarter during the day.*

It is in such august surroundings that "Papa Prevost," the veteran *chef*, advises young Leander, his favorite pupil ("the

*chef* of the age"), on his choice of an aide-de-camp in the approaching campaign of Tancred's coming-of-age banquet:—

"What you have learned from me came at least from a good school. It is something to have served under Napoleon," added Prevost, with the grand air of the imperial kitchen. "Had it not been for Waterloo I should have had the cross, but the Bourbons and the cooks of the empire never could understand each other. They brought over an emigrant *chef* who did not comprehend the taste of the age. He wished to bring everything back to the time of the *ail de bœuf*; when Monsieur passed my soup of Austerlitz untasted, I knew the old family was doomed; but we gossip. ... There is Andrieu ... you had some hopes of him. He is too young. I took him to Hellingsley, and he lost his head on the third day. I intrusted the *soufflés* to him, and but for the most desperate personal exertions all would have been lost. *It was an affair of the Bridge of Arcola.*"

"Ah, mon Dieu, there are moments!" exclaimed Prevost.

Equally too of the Thackerayan flavor is the account of Freeman and Trueman, the flunkeys attendant on Tancred in Palestine, who call an emir *the hameer*. The former comments on a Syrian castle:—

"There must have been a fine coming of age here," rejoined Trueman.

"As for that," replied Freeman, "comings of age depend in a manner upon meat and drink. They ain't in no way to be carried out with coffee and pipes; without oxen roasted whole and broached hogsheads they ain't in a manner legal."

And again while near the Lebanon.

"I know what you are thinking of, John," replied Mr. F. in a serious tone. "You are thinking if anything were to happen to either of us in this heathen land we should get Christian burial."

"Lord love you, Mr. Freeman, no I wasn't. I was thinking of a glass of ale."

"Ah!" sighed Freeman, "it softens the heart to think of such things away from home as we are. Do you know, John, there are times when I feel very queer, there are indeed. *I caught myself a-singing 'Sweet Home' one night among those savages in the wilderness. One wants consolation sometimes, one does, indeed, and for my part I do miss the family prayers and the home-brewed.*"

The Thackerayan irony is once more apparent in the picture of the sponging-house where Ferdinand Armine finds himself immersed:—

There were also indications of literary amusement in the room in the shape of a *Hebrew Bible* and the *Racing Calendar*;

\* Tancred.



and in the money-lender's advice for diminishing the loan required:—

"Fifteen hundred pound," ejaculated Mr. Levison. "Well, I suppose we must make it 700*l.* somehow or other, and you must take the rest in coals;"\*

in Mrs. Guy Flouncey, "sure of an ally directly the gentlemen appeared,"† (a Becky Sharp in miniature) as she cries in triumph after the aristocratic ball for which she has strenuously pined, "We have done it at last, my love."‡ And in the Radical manufacturer's confession of political faith, "I don't like extremes. A wise minister should take the duty off cotton wool."§

But the broader humor, that of Fielding and Dickens, is also forcibly represented in Lord Beaconsfield's pages. Perhaps few of our readers remember the squire in "Venetia"—surely a country cousin of the little judge in "Pickwick"—when Morgana, the suspected gipsy, is brought up for trial before him.

Trust me to deal with these fellows. . . . The hint of petty treason staggered him. . . . The court must be cleared. Constable, clear the court. *Let a stout man stand on each side of the prisoner to protect the bench. The magistracy of England will never shrink from doing their duty, but they must be protected.*

Or again the music hall in "Sybil" with its entertainments redolent of Vincent Crummies and Miss Snellicci:—

Some nights there was music on the stage. A young lady in a white robe with a golden harp, and attended by a gentleman in black mustachios. This was when the principal harpist of the king of Saxony and his first fiddle happened to be passing through Mowbray merely by accident on a tour of pleasure and instruction to witness the famous scenes of British industry. Otherwise the audience of the "Cat and Fiddle"—we beg pardon, we mean the "Temple of the Muses"—were fain to be content with four Bohemian brothers, or an equal number of Swiss sisters.

Or Mr. Fitzloom, the Manchester man in "Vivian Grey," who might have walked straight out of "Little Dorrit," if he had not lived so long before that wonderful work was written:—

"That is Miss Fitzloom?" asked Lady Madeline.

"Not exactly, my lady," said Mr. Fitzloom, "not exactly Miss Fitzloom, Miss Aurelia Fitzloom, my third daughter. 'Our third eldest,' as Mrs. Fitzloom sometimes says, for

*really it is necessary to distinguish with such a family as ours, you know."*

Or Lady Spirituelle, described like Mrs. Wititterly herself as "*all soul*,"\* or

Mr. Smith, the fashionable novelist, that is to say a person who occasionally publishes three volumes, one half of which contains the adventures of a young gentleman in the country, and the other volume and a half the adventures of the same young gentleman in the metropolis.†

In the same strain too is Lord Cadurcis' prejudice against Pontius Pilate—

from seeing him when I was a child on an old Dutch tile fireplace at Marringhurst, dressed like a Burgomaster.‡

And the school in "Vivian Grey" kept

by sixteen young ladies, all the daughters of clergymen, merely to attend to the morals and the linen; terms moderate, one hundred guineas per annum for all under six years of age, and a few extras only for fencing, pure milk, and the guitar.

And (to terminate this section of our illustrations) the celebrated Dartford election from "Coningsby," the rival of that at Eatanswill in "Pickwick." Its nomination day, "lounging without an object, and luncheon without an appetite," Magog Wrath and Bully Bluck with their rival war-cries, and above all Rigby's speech:—

He brought in his crack theme, the guilotine, and dilated so elaborately upon its qualities, that one of the gentlemen below could not refrain from exclaiming, "I wish you may get it." This exclamation gave Mr. Rigby what is called a great opening, which, like a practised speaker, he immediately seized. He denounced the sentiment as un-English, and got very much cheered. Excited by this success, *Rigby began to call everything else with which he did not agree un-English*, until menacing murmurs began to arise, when he shifted the subject and rose into a grand peroration, in which he assured them that the eyes of the whole empire were on this particular election (cries of "That's true" on all sides), and that England expected every man to do his duty. "And who do you expect to do yours," inquired a gentleman below, "about that 'ere pension?"

We must still, before we can consider our author's wit, treat, and of necessity briefly, his burlesque humor and his humorous development of character. The former is rifest, as is natural, in his earliest works, and overflowing with high spirits, though never of an impersonal

\* Henrietta Temple.

† Coningsby.

‡ Tancred.

§ Endymion.

\* Popanilla.

† Vivian Grey.

‡ Venetia.

nature. Their constant reference to politics and society allies them more nearly to "Gulliver's Travels" than to "The Rose and the Ring," though the whimsical Beckendorff and the episode in "Vivian Grey" of the Rhine-wine dukes is an exception to this rule. Let us commence with the earliest:—

"I protest," said the king of Thessaly, "against this violation of the most sacred rights."

"The marriage tie?" said Mercury.

"The dinner hour?" said Jove.

"It is no use talking sentiment to Ixion," said Venus, "mortals are callous."

"Adventures to the adventurous," said Minerva.\*

And the rubber between Teiresias and Proserpine in the "Infernal Marriage:—"

"The trick and two by honors," said Proserpine.

"Pray, my dear Teiresias, you, who are such a fine player, how came you to trump my best card?"

"Because I wanted the lead, and those who want to lead, please your majesty, must never hesitate about sacrificing their friends."

And the whole of "Popanilla," particularly the parable of the pineapples and the trial of the hero, who, arraigned on a charge of treason, discovers the indictment is for stealing camelopards, and is informed by the judge that originally Vraibleusia abounded with these splendid animals, to punish the destroyers of which his court was instituted:—

"Therefore," his lordship added, "in order to try you in this court for the modern offence of high treason, you must first be introduced by fiction of law as a stealer of camelopards, and then, being in *présenti regio*, in a manner, we proceed to business by a special power for the absolute offence." . . . The judge . . . summed up in the most impartial manner. He told the jury that although the case was quite clear against the prisoner, they were bound to give him the advantage of every reasonable doubt.

It is this excessive buoyancy that, flouting graver themes, has often, and sometimes not unjustly, been stigmatized as flippant, but which, in a famous passage † from one of the diatribes against Peel, was to be wielded as a formidable political weapon.

In the delineation of humorous character, despite the fact that political or social aims contract their horizon, we claim for Lord Beaconsfield at least moments of mastery. He has created types instead

of, like the conventional satirists, appropriating them. To borrow his own language, "his pleasure has been," to contrast the hidden motive with the public pretext of transactions.\* Because Sardonius is a paradox incarnate, we are not to forget that Lord Monmouth is a masterpiece, any more than the caricatures of Acres or Mrs. Malaprop should prevent our appreciation of the two Surfaces. In the masculine gallery, Lord Monmouth, Taper, and Tadpole (creations in Sheridan's best manner, but too familiar to recapitulate here), Essper George † (the modern Sancho Panza to a master the exact reverse of Don Quixote), St. Aldegonde, Rigby, Fakredeen (the Louis Napoleon of Syrian intrigue), Lord Montfort, the cynic who "knew he was dying when he found himself disobeyed," are remarkable, as are Bertie Tremaine, who "always walked home with the member who had made the speech of the evening," and who welcomed at his table "every one except absolute assassins," and Mr. Putney Giles, who, "intelligent, acquainted with everything except theology and metaphysics, liked to oblige, a little to patronize, never made difficulties, and always overcame them," and Mr. Phœbus, the muscular æsthete: while Lady Bellair (Lady Blessington ‡), who "hates people who are only rich," and in her old age "always has a gay season," Lady Montfort, the Scheherezadé of society, Zenobia, and Mrs. Guy Frouncey are attractively so in the feminine; though in his treatment of woman's character, Lord Beaconsfield chivalrously prefers the heroic to the humorous.

We have space to examine two only, and shall select them from what their author has styled the "dark sex."

Lord Monmouth is the Marquis of Steyne anatomized. He is the *marvais idéal* of the old Tory peers who were the pillars of the "organized hypocrisy." "Never wanting in energy when his own interests were concerned," "disliking to hear of people who were dead," "looking on human nature with the callous eye of a jockey," "when he pleased rather fascinating to young men," his superb selfishness and sordid sagacity are built up block by block, like some Pharaoh of Egyptian antiquity:—

\* Coningsby.

† Vivian Grey. The description of the Toadies in the same work, and the nomenclature in his earlier compositions, show how strongly Sheridan influenced the young D'Israeli.

‡ Henrietta Temple.

\* Ixion in Heaven. † That about Popkin's Plan.

Lord Monmouth worshipped gold, though if necessary he could squander it like a calif. He had even a respect for very rich men. It was his only weakness; the only exception to his general scorn for his species—wit, power, particular friendship, general popularity, public opinion, beauty, genius, virtue, all these are to be purchased; but it does not follow that you can buy a rich man. You may not be willing or able to spare enough. *A person or a thing that you could not buy became invested in the eyes of Lord Monmouth with a kind of halo, amounting almost to sanctity.*

His heartlessly diplomatic removal of Lady Monmouth through Rigby, his one sally of indignation provoked by his nephew's enthusiasm, "By —, some woman has got hold of him and made him a Whig," and his verdict on the Reform Bill, "D— the Reform Bill. If the duke had not quarrelled with Lord Grey, on a coal committee, we should never have had the Reform Bill," complete a portrait worthy of Juvenal. It is a grim figure, but we must not deny it almost its sole virtue, and that posthumous—the bequest to his creature Rigby:—

Lord Monmouth left to the Right Honorable Nicholas Rigby the bust of that gentleman which he had himself presented to his lordship, and which at his desire had been placed in the vestibule at Coningsby Castle, *from the amiable motive that after Lord Monmouth's decease, Mr. Rigby might wish perhaps to present it to some other friend.*

It is a relief to turn to Lord St. Aldegonde, the embodiment of the Radical nobleman. Two quotations shall suffice for the outlines of this delightful "free churchman," fresh in the recollection of all readers of "Lothair":—

... A republican of the reddest dye, he was opposed to all privilege, and indeed to all orders of men except Dukes, who were a necessity. He was also strongly in favor of the equal division of all property except land. Liberty depended on land, and the greater the land-owners the greater the liberty of a country. He would hold forth on this topic with energy, amazed at any one differing from him. "As if a fellow could have too much land," he would urge with a voice and glance which defied contradiction. ...

The meal was over. The bishop was standing near the mantelpiece talking to the ladies who were clustered round him. The arch-deacon, and the chaplain, and some other clergy, a little in the background. Lord St. Aldegonde, who, whether there were a fire or not, always stood with his hands in his pockets, moved discourteously among them, then assumed his usual position and listened as it were grimly for a few moments to their talk. Then he suddenly exclaimed in a loud voice

with the groan of a rebellious Titan, "How I hate Sunday!" "Granville!" exclaimed Lady St. Aldegonde, turning pale. There was a general shudder. "I mean in a country house," said Lord St. Aldegonde. "Of course I mean in a country house. I do not dislike it alone, and I do not dislike it in London, but Sunday in a country house is infernal."

We have dilated at some length on the various aspects of Lord Beaconsfield's humor, for it is to our minds far the most important feature of his writings, but after all it is for his daring and dazzling wit that he will universally be remembered. It is, as we have said, a rare quality, and it is also a gift that lives. Wit has wings. A happy phrase becomes a proverb, and the wittier half of a work, like the favorite melodies of a composition, survives the whole. The more will this be likely when the *πρώτη* is to repeat ourselves intellectually true, when fancy jumps with fact. This is, we imagine, the secret of Lord Beaconsfield's wit. It may seem paradoxical to assert of his most popular paradoxes that they are just, but we do so. He, like his Sidonia, "said many things that were strange, yet they instantly appeared to be true." Be this as it may, wit is certainly the most plentiful element of his later novels. They are confessedly novels of conversation.

In life surely [he observes in "Vivian Grey,"] man is not always as monstrously busy as he appears to be in novels and romances; we are not always in action, not always making speeches, or making money, or making war, or making love. Occasionally we talk about the weather, sometimes about ourselves, oftener about our friends, and as often about our enemies.

This conversational treatment is an element of their originality. Gradually as his political and social career became more definite and progressive, the humor in his novels recedes and the wit abounds. The only English prime minister who has been a professed wit, he felt its efficacy as a weapon, used it, and we may add never abused it. Squib, repartee, epigram, and lampoon, all applied by him, have yet never been misapplied to gloze immorality or profane religion. His very sneer is good humor, and if he was in any sense Diogenes, he was certainly a Diogenes who lived out of the tub.

Wit, to classify roughly, is twofold. There is the lightning wit that flashes off a short sentence or an apt reply, and there is the lambent wit that sparkles

either by description or dialogue. We shall begin with instances of the first. And here there is scarcely need to quote. Every one knows his aphorisms. The hansom cab, "the gondola of London," and the critics, "the men who have failed;"\* Tadpole's "Tory men and Whig measures," and Rigby's "little words in great capitals;" "Don Juan," the style of the House of Commons, "Paradise Lost," that of the House of Lords;" "All the great things have been done by the little nations," and "Our young queen and our old constitution," "The Whigs bathing," and, we may add, "London, the key of India;" are household words.

It is in "Coningsby" and "Lothair" that perhaps the best of his apophthegms are found. Thence spring "The government of great measures, or little men of humbug or humdrum;" and "Youth, the trustees of posterity;" "The Austrians, the Chinese of Europe;" and "Diplomatists the Hebrews of politics;" "Paris, the university of the world;" and "St. James's Square, the Faubourg St. Germain of London;" "The gentlemen who played with billiard-balls games that were not billiards;" and "The lady who sacrificed even her lovers to her friends;" "Most women are vain, some men are not;" and the lawyer who "was not an intellectual Cæsar, but had his pockets full of sixpences;" "Pantheism, atheism in domino;" and "Books, the curse of the human race;" "Pearls are like girls," and "Malt tax is madness;" of Austria, "Two things made her a nation—she was German and she was Catholic, and now she is neither;" and of the Reform Bill, "It gave to Manchester a bishop and to Birmingham a dandy." But indeed words fully as good as these are to be found throughout. It is time to recall Lord Squib's definition of the value of money, "very dear;" and Count Mirabel's (D'Orsay's) pleasantry, "Coffee and confidence;"† Essper George's "Like all great travellers I have seen more than I remember and remembered more than I have seen;"‡ and Popanilla, "The most dandified of savages and the most savage of dandies;" § "Venus, the goddess of watering-places;" ¶ and "Burlington, with his old loves and new dances;" || "Good fortune with good

management, no country house, and no children, is Aladdin's lamp;"\*\* and the "Treatise on a subject in which everybody is interested, in a style no one understands;"† the French actress who avers at supper, "No language makes you so thirsty as French;"‡ and the English tradesmen, who "console themselves for not getting their bills paid by inviting their customers to dinner." The utilitarian whose dogma was, "Rules are general, feelings are general, and property should be general;" and the definition of liberty, "Do as others do, and never knock men down."§ There has been scarcely time to forget the advice in "Lothair" to "go into the country for the first note of the nightingale and return to town for the first note of the muffin-bell;" or perhaps to remember Zenobia in "Endymion," "who liked handsome people, even handsome women," and Mr. Ferrars who committed suicide from a "want of imagination." A brace of very witty similes should not be here omitted. The one a comparison of the Parliament-built region of Harley Street to "a large family of plain children, with Portland Place and Portman Square for their respectable parents;" || the other, that of the detached breakfast tables at Brentham to "a cluster of Greek or Italian republics, instead of a great metropolitan table like a central government, absorbing all the genius and resources of society;" ¶ nor should the Heinesque lyric on "Charming Bignetta,"\*\* with its witty close, be suffered to die away unechoed:—

Charming Bignetta, charming Bignetta,  
What a wicked young rogue is charming Bignetta!

She laughs at my shyness, and flirts with his Highness,  
Yet still she is charming, that charming Bignetta!

Charming Bignetta, charming Bignetta,  
What a dear little girl is charming Bignetta!  
"Think me only a sister," said she trembling  
— I kissed her.

What a charming young sister is charming Bignetta!

In the same category too are those felicitous turns of terse expression, whether new or newly shaped, which distinguish Lord Beaconsfield above any other modern novelist. The "Parliamentary Christian," for Protestant, and the "freetrader in

\* Compare the "Infernal Marriage."—*"Ixion."*  
'Are there any critics in Hell?' 'Myriads,' rejoined the ex-king of Lydia.

† The Young Duke.

‡ Vivian Grey.

§ Ixion in Heaven.

|| The Young Duke.

\* Tancred.

† Vivian Grey.

‡ The Young Duke.

§ The Young Duke.

¶ Popanilla.

\*\* Tancred.

\*\* Lothair.

gossip," for the bad listener in "Lothair," the "Midland sea," for the Mediterranean in "Tancred" and "Venetia;" the figure of *unbuttoning one's brains*, and \* the jingle "plundered and blundered," of "Coningsby," the "heresy of cutlets," from "Venetia," the "ortolans stuffed with truffles and the truffles with ortolans" from "Endymion," the "confused explanations and explained confusions," from "Popanilla." The terms "stateswoman" and "anecdoteage," "melancholy ocean" and "Batavian grace," remind us that Benjamin Disraeli is the son of an author he has himself portrayed as sauntering on his garden terrace meditating some happy phrase.

It still remains for us to advert to the wit of sustained sparkle rather than of sudden flashes. Of this there is an admirable specimen in "Tancred." Lady Constance is alluding to "The Revelations of Chaos," a tract on evolution.

"... It shows you exactly how a star is formed; nothing could be so pretty. A cluster of vapor—the cream of the Milky Way, a sort of celestial cheese churned into light. You must read it; it is charming."

"Nobody ever saw a star formed," said Tancred.

"Perhaps not; you must read the Revelations. It is all explained. But what is most interesting is the way in which man has been developed. You know all is development. The principle is perpetually going on. First there was nothing, then there was something, then — I forget the next. I think there were shells, then fishes; then we came, let me see, did we come next — Never mind that — we came, and the next change there will be something very superior to us, something with wings. Ah! that's it, we were fishes, and I believe we shall be crows. . . . Everything is proved by geology, you know. . . . This is development; *we had fins, we may have wings.*"

This passage is not only wit, but humor also, according as we regard the speaker or the speech, and as both combined as in fact "Westoriental," irresistible. Or again, Herbert in "Venetia": —

"I doubt whether a man at fifty is the same material being that he is at five-and-twenty."

"I wonder," said Lord Cadurcis, "if a creditor brought an action against you at fifty for goods sold and delivered at five-and-twenty one could set up the want of identity as a plea in bar; it would be a consolation to an elderly gentleman."

Or the lady's reasoning on the Gulf Stream theory, —

"I think we want more evidence of a change. The vice-chancellor and I went down to a place we have near town on Saturday where there is a very nice piece of water, indeed, some people call it a lake. My boys wanted to skate, but that I would not permit."

"You believe in the Gulf Stream to that extent," said Lothair, "no skating."

Or once more, a piece of railleury from "Vivian Grey: —

"What a pity, Miss Manvers, that the fashion has gone out of selling oneself to the devil."

"Good gracious, Mr. Grey!"

"On my honor I am quite serious. It does appear to me to be a very great pity; *what a capital plan for younger brothers.* It is a kind of thing I have been trying to do all my life, and never could succeed. I began at school with toasted cheese and a pitchfork."

Or the report of the debate in the House of Lords "imposing particularly if we take a part in it."

Lord Exchamberlain thought the nation going on wrong, and he made a speech full of currency and constitution. Baron Deprivyseal seconded him with great effect, brief but bitter, satirical and sore. The Earl of Quarterday answered these full of confidence in the nation and himself. When the debate was getting heavy Lord Snap jumped up to give them something light. The Lords do not encourage wit, and so are obliged to put up with pertness. But Viscount Memoir was very statesmanlike and spouted a sort of universal history. Then there was Lord Ego, who vindicated his character when nobody knew he had one, and explained his motives because his auditors could not understand his acts.\*

Or the comparison of the Tories who supported Peel in his defection to the converted Saxons by Charlemagne: —

"... When the emperor appeared, instead of conquering he converted them. How were they converted? In battalions — the old chronicler informs us *they were converted in battalions and baptized in platoons.* It was utterly impossible to bring these individuals from a state of reprobation to one of grace with a celerity sufficiently quick.†

And last, though decidedly not least the dictum of Mendez Pinto: —

English is an expressive language, but not difficult to master. Its range is limited; it consists, as far as I can observe, of four words, "nice," "jolly," "charming," and "bore," and some grammarians add "fond."

And now we have done. Whatever the divergencies of opinion on the lit-

\* The Young Duke.

† Speech on the Repeal of the Corn Laws, May 15, 1846.

\* This expression is Beethoven's.



erary merit of Lord Beaconsfield—and this rests with the best critic, posterity—it is at least unquestionable that in wit and humor he never flags. There are those who have called him dull, and they are dullards. The Bœotians could hardly have proved fair judges of Aristophanes.

But our object in this article has been to vindicate a much higher honor for Lord Beaconsfield than any such mere cleverness. We have endeavored to prove that not only does he "sparkle with epigram and blaze with repartee" of unusual brilliance, but that his humor, necessarily hampered as it was by his surroundings and his aims, can boast keen insight and original manipulation; that the *bizarre* and the frivolous is the mere froth on its surface—unessential and evanescent—and that as a wit and a humorist he is now, by the prerogative of death, classi-

cal. Nor is the least enduring of the wreaths heaped upon his bier that he always, and in the best manner, amused us while he instructed, and instructed us while he amused.

His wit and his humor offer a complete refutation to the Shakespearian adage, "When the age is in the wit is out," for he preserved them youthful as a septuagenarian, and they in requital shall preserve his memory ever vivid and vigorous.

"Alas! poor Yorick, where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar?" may exclaim one who discerns only in Lord Beaconsfield the court jester. Our rejoinder shall be that of truth and reverence,—

He being dead yet speaketh.

WALTER SYDNEY SICHEL.

**MIND IN WORK.**—Medical men see a great deal of life, and nothing strikes the observant family practitioner more than the number of feeble, sauntering, and loitering minds with which he is brought into contact. No inconsiderable proportion of the common and some of the special ailments by which the multitude are affected may be traced to the want of vigor in their way of living. The human organism is a piece of physico-mental machinery which can only be successfully worked at a fairly high pressure. It will almost inevitably get out of gear if the propelling force is allowed to fall below a moderately high standard of pressure or tension, and that degree of tension cannot be maintained without so much interest as will secure that the mind of the worker shall be in his work. It is curious to observe the way in which particular temperaments and types of mental constitution are, so to say, gifted with special affinities, or predilections for particular classes of work. The men who work in hard material are men of iron will, which is equivalent to saying that the men of what is called hard-headed earnestness find a natural vent for their energy in work that requires and consumes active power. On the other hand, the worker in soft materials is commonly either theoretical or dreamy. There is a special type of mental constitution connected with almost every distinct branch of industry, at least with those branches which have existed long enough to exercise a sufficient amount of influence on successive generations of workers. We are all familiar with what are called the racial types of character. It would be well if some attention could be bestowed on the industrial types, both in relation to educational policy and the study of mental and physical habits in health and disease.

Lancet.

THE *Times* Bucharest correspondent describes a curious result following the recent earthquake which passed under that city. The soil of Bucharest is a rich, black, porous vegetable mould, very springy under pressure, and carriages passing in a street cause a strong vibration in the adjacent houses. The Grand Hôtel Boulevard, however, was an exception to this general rule, and in the correspondent's room, facing the principal street, on which there is a heavy traffic, he never could feel any sensible effect from passing vehicles. During the recent earthquake the windows and crockery in less massively constructed buildings rattled very sensibly, whereas there was no audible sound produced in the hotel mentioned. Since the earthquake shock, however, this state of things has changed entirely, and every vehicle passing the hotel causes vibration in the whole building. The singular part of this change consists in the fact that the effect produced by the vehicle is precisely the same as that accompanying the earthquake. It is not a jar as previously produced in other buildings, but a sawing motion similar to that described in the correspondent's telegram relating to the late shock of earthquake. This movement is so great as to cause pictures to sway backwards and forwards on the walls, and it is equally perceptible in the rear corner rooms farthest from the street. The hotel is of brick, covered outside with mastic, which would show at once any crack in the walls. He has carefully examined the exterior of the building and there is not a crack in it. Hence, he thinks, this change in the solidity of the structure appears to be due to some effect produced in the earth underneath the building by the shock of earthquake.